

السؤال الثاني



BONFIRE NIGHT
Putting a bit of
sparkle into life
Section 3, page 1



SATURDAY REVIEW
The power and the
glory of Cleopatra
Review, page 16



OXFORD DAYS
Dark side of the
dreaming spires
Page 12

**TV AND
RADIO**
Section 3,
pages 16-17

THE TIMES

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50p

Major wins back waverers with Maastricht-free motion

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

JOHN Major's hopes of isolating his hard-core Euro-rebels were boosted last night as the government's carefully crafted motion for Wednesday's Maastricht debate began to bring waverers back to the fold.

The motion, which calls for the treaty ratification legislation to proceed without mentioning Maastricht, spread confusion among the sceptics, but it was still clear that the Conservative whips face a struggle to be sure of victory.

Labour intends to put the rebels on the spot by tabling an amendment proposing that the bill should not be brought back until after the Edinburgh summit meeting — one of the main demands of the Conservative right-wing 92 group — and there were signs last night that Mr Major may not, after all, be able to count on the votes of all the Liberal Democrats.

Paddy Ashdown has told the prime minister that he would support a motion making progress towards ratification, but the party president

That this House notes that the European Communities (Amendment) Bill received a majority of 244 at its second reading and was committed to a committee of the whole House;

Acknowledges that the House was promised a debate prior to the committee stage;

Notes that the Danish Government's intentions have now been clarified;

Recalls the Lisbon Council's commitment to subsidiarity, the Birmingham Council's agreement on a framework for decisions to implement that principle and the practical steps already taken to achieve it;

Recognises that the UK should play a leading role in the development of the European Community to achieve a free market Europe open to accession by other European democracies, thereby promoting employment, prosperity and investment into the UK;

And invites Her Majesty's Government to proceed with the Bill in order that the House should consider its provisions in further detail.

Charles Kennedy raised doubts yesterday when he described the motion as a contrivance. He said: "We have made clear all along, if it is a confidence vote we will be voting against the government. But if it is a genuine motion to bring forward progress on Maastricht we will vote positively for Maastricht. We will have to wait and see what stunt the government now chooses to put on this."

The party's Scottish conference will today debate a motion calling on its 20 MPs to side with Labour next week, but senior party sources still expected the vast majority to back the government.

Even if the Liberal Democrats do vote with Mr Major, Tory rebel organisers appear well placed to push the government close. To avoid the possibility of defeat, the rebels must be kept below 30 — but 22 Tories voted against the bill at its second reading, and a survey by The Times found that at least six more were intending to vote against the government this time.

Several others had yet to decide. The position was clouded, however, by signs that some of the hardline 22 might be having second thoughts because of Mr Major's Thursday night appeal for unity and the cunning wording of the motion.

The motion, which government business managers took 24 hours to draft, avoids a ringing endorsement of the treaty, but it represents a clear mandate for pressing on with ratification. One rebel said last night: "We are in danger of being conned. With Labour on our side, this may be our only chance of defeating the bill. The government will use victory next week as a carte

blanche to push on regardless, and yet we seem to be weakening. It is fiendishly clever."

Sir George Gardiner, Tory MP for Reigate and chairman of the 92 group, said: "This motion is so general one wonders why it was necessary to table a substantive motion at all." Sir George, who had been expected to vote against, is now likely to abstain or support the government.

Labour said the test for the Tory dissidents was whether they could vote against its amendment, which was central to their demands. George Robertson, the party's European affairs spokesman who described the motion as "highly defensive", said Labour would invite Tory rebels to back the amendment but he indicated that he did not expect to defeat the government. "I think that we expect Tory rebellions to fade because that is the experience of the last 13 years, but they are going to have to eat a lot of humble pie in the process," he told BBC Radio 4's *The World at One*.

William Cash, MP for Stafford and one of the leading dissidents, said he was totally opposed to the Maastricht Treaty and the bill to ratify it, but added that he would not decide how to vote on the motion until Monday. He acknowledged that the motion was "a very adroit and clever piece of drafting".

Mr Major meanwhile declared: "We are going to win next week." The dissidents, he said, "do not represent the majority of the Conservative party and they don't represent the majority of people in this country."

Weekend pressure, page 2
Diary, page 12

US polls point to close race

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER
IN WASHINGTON

A BATCH of conflicting new polls put President Bush between one and ten points behind Bill Clinton yesterday, setting the scene for a frantic last three days before next Tuesday's vote.

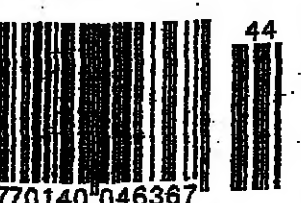
A CNN/USA Today tracking poll had Mr Clinton on 41 per cent and Mr Bush on 40, and a Newsweek poll had figures of 41 and 39 respectively. Those polls focused on likely voters, but other surveys of all adults showed wider margins. The ABC News tracking poll put Mr Clinton nine points ahead. An NBC-Wall Street Journal poll had a ten-point gap, dropping to six among those who vote regularly. All showed Ross Perot's support falling to between 13 and 16 points.

State surveys show Mr Bush closing on Mr Clinton in key battlegrounds such as Michigan, and he has edged fractionally ahead in Florida and Texas, which he has to win.

Campaign trail, page 10
Diary, page 12

Births, marriages, deaths	14-15
Business	17-26
Court and Social	14
Crossword	16
Leading articles	13
Obituaries	15
Sport	27-32
Weather	16
Arts	14
Concise Crossword	18
Food and Drink	4-5
Gardening	8
TV and radio	Weekend

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Twenty miles of misery as refugees flee Bosnian ruins

FROM TIM JUDAH AND DESSA TREVISAN IN BELGRADE

THOUSANDS of refugees from the central Bosnian town of Jajce were yesterday fleeing one of the most dramatic and catastrophic defeats in 16 months of war in the former Yugoslavia. A column of humanity 20 miles long trailed under fire out of the ruins of the town, which "does not exist any more", according to a Bosnian official.

Under siege by Serb forces since the summer, much of Jajce finally fell on Thursday. But fighting was reported to be continuing yesterday. The number of refugees heading southeast towards Travnik and Vitez is said to be between 15,000 and 20,000. In Geneva, United Nations officials said emergency aid was being sent.

Serb forces wanted to take Jajce, which had a Serb population of barely 10 per cent, because they need to control its hydroelectric plants, which supply power to Serb-held northern Bosnia. Croats and Muslims in control of the generating facilities cut off

power to the Serb-held territories in August.

In Tehran yesterday, the increasingly desperate President Izetbegovic of Bosnia threatened to use poison gas against advancing Serbs unless the arms embargo against his republic was lifted. Bosnia has no chemical or poison-gas weapons, but his remarks appeared to refer to earlier threats to defend cities such as Tuzla and Gradacac with gas canisters from Tuzla's chemical industry.

The diplomatic front looked equally bleak as Serbs, who have already rejected the peace plan put forward for Bosnia by Lord Owen and Cyrus Vance, promised that today would mark an important step towards the founding of a "greater Serbia".

The parliaments of the self-proclaimed Serbian republics in Bosnia and Croatia, known as Krajina, are to meet in the northern Bosnian Serb citadel of Prijedor to begin the process of unifying their republics.

Milovan Milanovic, vice-

president of the Bosnian Serb parliament, said that the two republics would begin by co-operating on defence and economic matters. They already use the same currency, and Krajina soldiers have fought with the Bosnian Serbs since the beginning of the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Goran Hadzic, the president of Krajina, said that the Prijedor meeting would begin the process of uniting Serbs in Bosnia and Croatia as well as laying the foundation for a union of Serbian states. This would be a four-republic federation, including Serbia and Montenegro. He hoped the union would come into being by next spring.

President Tudjman of Croatia also did his bit to write off the Bosnian constitutional proposals by saying that he stood by the ethnic division plans preferred by the Serbo-Croats: these would mean de facto partition by Serbs and Croats.

Patten seeks more power over schools

BY MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

JOHN Patten, the education secretary, yesterday presented his 200-page education bill, the longest in parliamentary history, and said it would establish a new framework for schools, raise classroom standards and improve choice for parents and pupils.

The bill, which will give him 44 new powers, would smooth the path of schools from local authority control to grant-maintained status and enact the reforms envisaged in July's white paper, he said.

The bill, due for its second reading on November 9, proposes a new central agency to distribute funds to opted-out schools which will assume other powers as the grant-maintained sector expands. Sub-standard schools will be taken over by outside managers appointed by Mr Patten and prepared for opting out or closure, and a council will be set up to monitor national curriculum tests and syllabuses.

Mr Patten was immediately criticised for having failed to take note of outside submis-

sions during the white paper consultation. Ann Taylor, shadow education secretary, said that the bill was a dangerous exercise in centralisation. "It is another set of experiments on the nation's children, providing instability and uncertainty," she said.

Don Foster, Liberal Democrat education spokesman, said that Mr Patten had failed in his bid to emulate Rab Butler's 1944 Education Act and that the education jigsaw had become "a Jackson Pollock instead of an English landscape, an image of chaos".

Teaching unions said that the bill failed to address the question of resources. Doug McAvoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, described the bill as a charter for interference which would be "bad for children, bad for parents, bad for teachers and bad for standards".

Details of the bill, page 6
Oxford's darker side, page 12
Leading article, page 13

Madonna sex hype alarms Carey

By Ruth Gledhill
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

DR GEORGE Carey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, last night condemned "the constant marketing of explicit sex and human pain", adding: "It is time as a nation we recovered our sense of right and wrong."

The archbishop named no individuals, but his office said that Madonna, the pop star, David Mellor, the former heritage secretary, and the events of the summer, which would include coverage of the royal family, were examples of what he had in mind.

In a hard-hitting speech, reminiscent of the firebrand sermons of the great 18th and 19th-century moral Evangelical preachers, Dr Carey said: "I believe that the constant marketing of explicit sex and human pain, in most cases purely for entertainment, nourishes an obsession with these aspects of life which is damaging."

"It may make irresponsible attitudes and dangerous behaviour more likely in society at large, for it detaches our experience of sex, pain or suffering from any context of love and respect for other people. And the weakening of that link can have dire consequences."

Dr Carey spoke in terms of a battle between good and evil. Drawing on the "privatisation of morality", a theme that he has developed repeatedly in previous speeches, he called on the Church of England to "encourage all those who are striving to arrest and reverse such processes". His speech was delivered at Christ Church parish centre in High Harrogate at the start of the archbishop's three-day visit to the Ripon diocese.

Dr Carey's office said he had not seen Madonna's book, *Sex*, nor had members of his staff. The archbishop did not name individuals because he wanted the speech to have a wider impact.

Thatcher defends heart of oak against EC

By Robin Stacey

BARONESS Thatcher had a dig at an obscure European Commission directive as she planted an oak sapling in the grounds of Winston Churchill's former home yesterday.

She was praising the National Trust for its efforts in replacing trees lost in the hurricane five years ago when, deviating slightly from her prepared speech, she remarked: "I have heard that the European Commission, in a draft directive, has stated that Euro-furniture may not be made of English oak because it is too knotty. How outrageous."

Few of the audience would have guessed she was referring to a little-known EC regulation seeking to halt the sale of English oak seeds because German and Italian varieties have fewer knots and nobbles. The former prime minister's joke was closer to home than she may have guessed, as the logo of the National Trust, the owners of Chartwell, whose dignitaries made up most of the audience, is a sprig of oak growing with acorns.

Lady Thatcher agreed to plant the oak sapling in 1987, when she was prime minister, as a symbol of regeneration after the ravages of the great storm. For five years the sapling has been nursed in a Chartwell greenhouse awaiting yesterday's ceremony.

Diary, page 12



British oak: Baroness Thatcher plants the sapling at Chartwell yesterday

VACHERON CONSTANTIN
GENEVE 1855-1955

Asprey

Whips redouble efforts as fresh defections offset signs of faltering rebellion

Tory rebels must survive long weekend of pressure

By Philip Webster, Chief Political Correspondent

CONSERVATIVE MPs intending to hold out and vote against the government over Maastricht on Wednesday face a weekend of pressure in their constituencies and a further bout of lobbying by the prime minister and his colleagues early next week.

Signs yesterday that some of the potential rebels were returning to the fold will have encouraged the whips and party officials to step up their pressure to isolate the die-hards. Their objective will be to reduce the rebellion to the point where it will no longer be necessary to rely on the support of the Liberal Democrats to avoid defeat.

As usual the tactics of the whips will depend on the individual concerned. Gentle persuasion will be applied to some; the heavy hand to others. Already there were allegations yesterday by some MPs that officials from Conservative central office had been ringing local associations to try to bring MPs into line.

Surveys of the potential rebels indicated clearly that the government still has some work to do to be sure of success next week. If the 22 MPs who voted against the bill on second reading were to hold firm — and there were indications yesterday that one or two of them might be wavering — it would require only a further nine Tories to vote against the government to take it to the brink of defeat.

By last night it appeared that the rebels could get uncomfortably close to that total despite the careful wording of the government motion. Six MPs who did not vote against the government on second reading are now firmly expected to do so. They are Warren Hawksley (Halesowen & Stourbridge), Peter Griffiths (Forthmouth N), Peter Fry (Wellingborough), John Wilkinson (Ruislip-Northwood), Barry Legg (Milton Keynes SW) and Bill Walker (Tayside N).

The 22 who voted against the second reading are: Rupert Allason (Torbay), John Biffen (Shropshire N), Sir Richard Boff (Holland with Boston), Nick Budgen (Wolverhampton SW), John Butcher (Coventry SW), John Carlisle (Luton N), Michael Carriss (Gt Yarmouth), William Cash (Stafford), James Cran (Beverley), Christopher Gill (Ludlow), Theresa

Gorman (Billerica), Harry Greenway (Ealing N), Andrew Hunter (Basingstoke), Toby Jessel (Twickenham), Tony Marlow (Northampton N), David Porter (Waveney), Richard Shepherd (Aldridge Brownhills), Sir Trevor Skeet (Bedfordshire N), Michael Spicer (Worcestershire S), Sir Teddy Taylor (Southend E), Ann Winterton (Congleton) and Nicholas Winterdon (Macclesfield). Mr Allason is now expected to vote with.

Others who could join the rebel camp are Iain Duncan-Smith (Chingford), Bernard Jenkin (Colchester N), Walter Sweeney (Vale of Glamorgan), John Whittingdale (Colchester S and Maldon), Michael Lord (Suffolk Central), Vivian Benda (Ilford N), and Roger Knapman (Stroud).

Those who have been encouraged to switch behind the government by Mr Major's address to the 1922 committee and by the wording of the motion include Phil Galle (Ayr), David Evans (Welwyn & Hatfield), Den Dover (Chorley), Michael Fabricant (Staffs Mid) and John Greenway (Ryedale). Others, such as Sir George Gardiner (Reigate), chairman of the '92 group, are now more likely to abstain or vote for the government.

All the seeps will face something of a dilemma over the Labour amendment. This will propose simply that the bill should not be brought back to the Commons until after the Edinburgh summit — one of the key demands of the '92 group.

Although the mood of government business managers was one of growing optimism the arithmetic still suggested a tight finish. The Opposition forces are expected to be made up of 267 Labour votes, 12 Unionists, four SDLP MPs, four Welsh nationalists and three Scottish nationalists, a total of 290. If 30 Tory votes were added to that total it would come to 320.

The theoretical Tory vote of 334 could be swelled by 19 Liberal Democrats, and Sir James Kilfedder, the Ulster Popular Unionist for North Down, taking it up to 354. If the notional 30 Tory rebel votes were subtracted the Conservative tally would be 324, giving the government a majority in low single figures.

Major's motion, page 1
Diary, page 12



Bill Walker



Barry Legg



John Wilkinson



Peter Griffiths



Warren Hawksley



Peter Fry

Danes set stage for war of nerves on text

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

DANISH MPs yesterday approved their government's list of requested changes to the EC's Maastricht treaty — and lit the touchpaper for an explosive struggle at the Edinburgh EC summit in December.

To the relief of Europe's recession-battered governments, the Danish prime minister, Poul Schlüter, has fashioned a position facing both ways at once. He wants, as he says, to change the treaty without amending it.

Danish voters will next year be asked to reverse last June's referendum, which threw out Maastricht, and must be offered something "new". However, no other EC government wants to contemplate the complications of renegotiation.

The Danish foreign minister, Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, is due in London next Tuesday to explore ways of squaring this legal and diplomatic circle. However, awkward reminders of the difficulties keep popping up. A leaked Foreign Office memo this week noted that signs were coming into focus and Jacques Delors, the European Commission president, reminded everyone that the EC had agreed that there would be no tinkering with a

word of the treaty. The Danes could have helpful footnotes, he said, but no more.

M. Delors manages to upset the Danes almost every time he speaks about them, and his advisers' indiscreet speculation over small states' likely loss of influence in the EC of the late 1990s helped to tip Danes against the treaty.

Yesterday, Mr Schlüter retorted that governments, and not M. Delors, decide this issue.

In truth, M. Delors was doing no more than underlining an inconvenient truth, and also voicing the thoughts that the federalist majority of governments are too timid to voice. No state can be forced to sign an unwanted treaty, M. Delors said, but then neither can any country "have a right of veto so enormous" that it can stop others going ahead.

Yet, legally, if one state fails to ratify, Maastricht is void. The stage is set for a war of nerves that will fray tempers all the way to Edinburgh. Ten EC governments want Britain to ratify as soon as possible so that the EC can turn to intimidating the Danes into abandoning any idea of re-opening the treaty.

Major puzzles press in Copenhagen

AS OTHERS SEE US
A weekly look at how the world views Britain

FROM CHRISTOPHER FOLLETT IN COPENHAGEN

WITH Mr Uffe Ellemann-Jensen, the Danish foreign minister, due in London on Tuesday for talks with British leaders, the Danish press has been stressing the key role the British EC presidency holds in helping the Danes out of their Maastricht dilemma.

Doubts have arisen about London's real position. The Copenhagen daily *Politiken* writes of "unrest" in London, citing the leaking earlier this week of a confidential British foreign office document stating that the Danish compromise will be difficult for EC member states to accept.

"Britain is the EC nation with the best understanding of Denmark's wishes," declared *Information* in a leading article. "There can be little doubt that Mr Major will get the Maastricht treaty ratified by his parliament, but ... it is difficult to understand how any politician can defend a treaty which is so unpopular with Britons without allowing a referendum to be held." It

said narrow-minded insularity, petty nationalism and "haired of Germany" seemed to be the order of the day.

Berlingske Tidende, noting the strange consensus between Danish socialists and Mr Major on Europe, was puzzled by his seemingly contradictory statements on the subject. "It is odd that John Major can declare his unequivocal belief in European union at the same time as insisting that the Danish problem must be solved before the Maastricht treaty can go into force."

In France, the press has been more concerned with Albion's economic woes. *L'Evenement du Jeudi* sees Britain as "bled white by a decade of Thatcherism, deeply split and in a worse state than during the 1940 Blitz".

"A Brazil-style inflationary depression looms on Britain's horizon ... unless the kingdom is dismantled as being economically non-viable or Sony moves in to buy it up," it said.

Brussels headhunts Thatcher's press guru

By Tom Walker and Arthur Leathley

THE EC Commission, desperate for "great communications" to promote a positive message, has Sir Bernard Ingham, Baroness Thatcher's former press guru, in its sights. Unfortunately, that message has not yet reached Sir Bernard.

Journalists in Brussels were astonished yesterday when Sir Bernard, a doughty critic of the Eurocratic regime, was named as a potential member of a team of renowned information specialists to serve on an EC think-tank. As yet, however, the Commission has not communicated its intention to the communicator who, for 11 years, was Mrs Thatcher's lieutenant in her battles with Brussels.

"It's like the sheep inviting the wolf into the fold," said Robert Harris, author of *Good and Faithful Servant*, a biography of Sir Bernard, who recalled Sir Bernard's riposte during Anglo-French talks at the Elysee Palace to President Mitterrand's praise of Camembert cheese. Sir Bernard said: "Yes, but it can poison you."

Apart from drawing up a shortlist of possible consultants, or advisers, the Commission is trying to lend itself some chutzpah by contracting advertising agencies to promote the EC theme. This year Saatchi & Saatchi's Paris office was paid £300 million to produce Euro-logos, information and accompanying television advertisements at the Albertville and Barcelona Olympics.

NEWS IN BRIEF

195,000 told to boil contaminated water

Nearly 200,000 people in southern England were told to boil their tap water yesterday after supplies were found to be contaminated by a micro-organism capable of causing serious stomach upsets. In Southampton, parts of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight, loudspeaker vans toured the streets and thousands of warning notices were posted through doors after routine sampling by Southern Water detected the presence of the parasite *Cryptosporidium* in the Testwood treatment works near Southampton. Hospital managers were told to boil drinking water and not to serve food washed with tap water.

Barry Gardiner, Southern Water's Hampshire water manager, said 192,000 customers were being asked to boil their supplies until further notice. As soon as the treatment works was clear, he said, its whole supply system, involving hundreds of miles of pipes, would be flushed but this could take several days. *Cryptosporidium*, a parasite that lives in the guts of cattle and sheep, is believed to have entered the river Test, which supplies the treatment works, from animal slurry running off farmland in the recent heavy rains.

County's 999 chief quits

Another chief ambulance officer has resigned amid allegations that the quality of the service is being sacrificed for commercial considerations. Michael Robinson, who heads the service in Kent, claimed that his successor would be forced to make big staff cuts and ignore the caring side of the business to satisfy budget demands. Earlier this week, John Wilby, chief executive of the London Ambulance Service, resigned after health service union claims that a new computer system designed to allocate calls more efficiently might have led to the deaths of up to 20 patients. Mr Robinson, who has been with the service for 24 years, claims that morale in the service is at rock bottom.

Contract husband jailed

A woman whose husband hired a hitman to murder her for £20,000 vowed to stand by him yesterday when he was jailed for six years by Teesside Crown Court. The love of Patricia Smurthwaite, 38, for Keith Smurthwaite, 38, a builder, who did not know that the hitman was an undercover policeman and that their meetings were being taped, had saved him two more years in prison, Mr Justice Bilefeld said. A psychiatrist had told the court that Smurthwaite was mentally ill. The judge told Smurthwaite, of Great Broughton, North Yorkshire, who denied soliciting his wife's murder: "I have paid careful attention to the feelings of your wife, who still loves you."

Peer barred from Lords

Lord Beaverbrook, the former Conservative party treasurer, has been barred from sitting in the House of Lords because he is bankrupt. The 40-year-old peer declared himself insolvent two weeks ago and immediately took leave of absence from the House of Lords. He joins 29 other peers who have been disbarred for the same reason this century, including Lord Lucan, two Dukes of Manchester and the Earl of Clancarty, who was declared bankrupt three times at the beginning of the century. Peers can also be legally disbarred for treason or insanity. Lord Beaverbrook, grandson of the newspaper baron, had run up £5 million in debts after bad investments in rainforests and classic cars.

Icon sold to Tate

An icon of the Industrial Revolution has been saved for the nation after a £2.2 million deal between the Tate Gallery and the estate of Earl Mountbatten of Burma. An *Iron Forge* by Joseph Wright of Derby has as its theme the powers of nature being harnessed by man. It had been scheduled for sale at Sotheby's on November 18, but negotiations led by the dealer Jack Baer of Hazlitt Gooden and Fox meant a private treaty sale could be arranged. Contributions of £900,000 were made by the National Heritage Memorial Fund, and £125,000 by the National Art Collections Fund. The price, payable over two financial years, is based on a gross valuation of £3.25 million.

Battle of all mothers

A High Court judge said that Susan Sadjady, right, of Northolt, north London, has won a "resounding victory over the army". Mrs Sadjady, 28, had claimed she was sexually discriminated against when she was turned down for the Territorials. But, said the judge, the army had since apologised to the mother and said advice given by a recruiting officer was contrary to policy.



Human waste recycled

Technology which transforms human waste into coffee-like granules usable as fertiliser and soil conditioner was unveiled in Bristol yesterday and praised by the Prince of Wales. The Biodrier was chosen by Wessex Water to treat 250,000 tons of sewage sludge previously dumped at sea. By 1998 none of Britain's water companies will be able to dispose of sewage into the marine environment under EC rules. The odourless granules contain high levels of phosphates and important amounts of nitrates.

Drink-driver jailed

A drunk, speeding driver who killed a cyclist was jailed for nine months by the Central Criminal Court yesterday after a judge told him: "It would be quite wrong if your whole future was destroyed by this." Mr Recorder Andrew Collins QC said he hoped Anthony Peters, 29, could return to his job as a London Transport engineering instructor. Peters, of Rotherhithe, southeast London, was four times over the limit. He was convicted of causing the death of Paul Wither, 26, a student, of Bermondsey, by reckless driving.

Widow charged

The widow of a man stabbed to death in woods near his home was charged last night with conspiracy to murder him. Sandra Wignall, 47, is due to appear before magistrates in Woking, Surrey, today, following the death of her husband Robert, 55, of Addlestone, Surrey, who was found dead on September 5. She is jointly charged with Terence Bewley, 43, of Ruislip, west London. Two other men were being questioned by detectives last night in connection with the killing.

Lawyer killed in street

A lawyer was killed while walking his dog, shortly after being involved in a dispute with a group of youths, police said last night. Gerry Friel, 47, of Dumbarton, Strathclyde, was attacked as he walked through a shopping centre about a mile from his home late on Thursday night. He was found lying in the street and died soon after being taken to hospital. Police were looking last night for a group of youths seen running from the shopping centre.

Any port in a storm, but only Dow's for yr spouse.

DOW'S PORT

From THE GREAT AGE of Port Drinking.

Man stabbed wife to death after tracing her to women's refuge

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A MAN who stabbed his wife to death at a women's refuge was ordered yesterday to be detained indefinitely at a secure hospital. Leeds Crown Court was told that Alan Newton, 42, had tracked down the secret address after it was revealed by a BT engineer.

Patricia Newton, 37, who had left her husband after 20 years of marital cruelty, was stabbed 12 times as she huddled with four women and five children in an attic of the hostel in Doncaster, South Yorkshire. Her husband, of Dinnington, near Rotherham, who attempted suicide

after the killing, admitted manslaughter on the grounds of diminished responsibility. The court was told that, at the time of the killing, Newton, a fish and chip shop owner, had been suffering from severe depression brought about by the breakdown of his marriage. Mr Justice Ognall ordered that he be kept in a secure hospital in Rotherham "without limitation of time".

As he was led from the dock, Beryl Simpson, Mrs Newton's sister, shouted: "Rot in hell." Brian Walsh QC, for the prosecution, had told the court that Mrs Newton had been

subjected to years of verbal abuse from her husband. Early in their marriage, he had become jealous and possessive after discovering that his wife had had an affair. From then on, he rarely let her out of the house alone.

The marriage deteriorated after the couple opened a fish and chip shop which ran into cash difficulties. Mrs Newton started to suffer from depression. There was considerable friction and arguing over money, the court was told.

In October last year, Mrs Newton, a mother-of-two, moved to the refuge. Newton became depressed and suicidal. He made widespread attempts to find his wife, contacting local newspapers who then reported her disappearance and his attempts to find her.

He first discovered the telephone number of the refuge through his wife's sister. He contacted his wife by pretending to be a policeman, but she put the telephone down. He finally obtained the address through a friend, helped by a BT engineer who was later sacked and prosecuted for giving unauthorised information, Mr Walsh said.

Newton stalked out the refuge on November 12 and returned with a kitchen knife. He smashed a window, climbed inside and made his way to the attic bathroom where the women and children were hiding. "He grabbed his wife by the hair and pulled her to the ground, stabbing her at least 12 times," Mr Walsh said. "The children at the refuge were absolutely terrified."

Two of the wounds pierced his wife's heart and she died from loss of blood. Newton then attempted to kill himself by cutting his left wrist before making his way to his sister's home. He told police who arrived an hour later: "I know what I have done. I just want to die. I am just very sorry."

Mr Justice Ognall told Newton: "You have committed a truly terrible crime but I am satisfied from the totality of the evidence that you were indeed almost unbalanced at the time."

Hidden jury finds drug baron guilty

BY A STAFF REPORTER

A WEALTHY showbusiness figure suspected by Scotland Yard to be a "godfather" of organised crime was convicted yesterday of supplying two controlled class A drugs, £200,000 worth of heroin and £110,000 worth of opium.

As he left the Old Bailey dock after a four-week trial "Big" Joseph Pyle, 56, was smiling. The case attracted security even tighter than for IRA trials — after police were tipped off about an escape plot. Armed police who had been issued with gas masks ringed the courtroom and everyone entering was searched thoroughly.

Most of the public gallery was railed off and the jury of seven men and five women hidden from view. Throughout the case, the jurors were given 24-hour protection by teams of officers.

An earlier trial at Southwark Crown Court collapsed when three jury members claimed that they had been approached with offers of up to £7,000 to return not guilty verdicts, and threatened with harm if they did not comply.

Pyle, of Morden, Surrey, a film and record producer with offices at Pinewood Studios, was convicted of supplying two controlled class A drugs, £200,000 worth of heroin and £110,000 worth of opium. Peter Gillett, 33, of Burgess Hill, West Sussex, the "adopted" son of gangland killer Ronnie Kray, and Francis Tyson, 62, salesman, of no fixed address, were convicted of supplying opium.

A fourth accused, Terence Plummer, 56, a film stuntman, of Leatherhead, Surrey, was cleared of any connection with illegal drugs deals and discharged. He said he visited Pyle to talk about a film script.

In 1984, Pyle was named by police as an important international criminal with links to the Mafia. But despite the tag, yesterday was his first conviction for a serious crime for many years.

Judge Colston remanded Pyle, Gillett, a pop song writer and singer, and Tyson in custody and will sentence them on November 27.

Police seek evidence against molester

BY RICHARD FORD

A MAN who allegedly admitted sexually abusing his teenage daughter could face charges after an announcement yesterday that police are to see if fresh evidence is available to support a prosecution.

Detectives are at steady reports that during an assessment period in a private clinic the man allegedly confessed to molesting his daughter, now aged 17. Michael Woodhouse, Det Chief Supt in charge of Nottinghamshire CID, said: "We are examining the implications with the fact that he did not confess to the police, to determine whether fresh evidence is available."

As the police promised to re-

investigate the case, which provoked the criticism of a High Court judge, a woman who has been caring for the victim said the girl remained frightened and vulnerable.

"She has suffered sleepless nights. She is frightened. She is a nice girl, she has integrity and she has courage," the woman said. "She has been absolutely terrified and is certainly not free to roam the streets as she pleases."

The woman said that the girl had sobbed when she heard of a civil action in which Nottinghamshire County Council was criticised for refusing to pay £15,000 for 12 months' therapy for her father. Nottinghamshire social ser-

vices took civil action to bar the man from the family home but had no money to pay for treatment at Graceland Clinic in Birmingham, even though the county council paid for the man to attend for assessment. Nottingham health authority has said it will pay the cost of the treatment.

The woman said the girl had expected her father to be put away for a long time so that her other sister would be protected.

In the High Court on Wednesday, Mr Justice Ward found that the man had persistently abused his daughter over several years, having intercourse with her and committing serious sexual

Shakespeare meets cartoon characters in new TV series

Going overboard: the puppet king taking a tumble in *The Tempest*

Russian puppets upstage the Bard

BY SARAH JANE CHECKLAND

DRASTICALLY abridged Shakespeare plays, performed by puppets and cartoon characters, are to be shown on BBC2 in a series produced in collaboration with Russian animators. The puppets are expected to knock it, but the Prince of Wales has already given his approval.

Shakespeare, The Animated Tales will begin screening on November 9. Each play will be reduced to 30 minutes. Among the actors providing voices for the characters are Willie Rushon as Sir Toby Belch, Zoe Wannamaker as Lady Macbeth and Timothy West as Prospero.

Some of the films, such as *Macbeth*, use familiar animation techniques. *Hamlet*, however, draws on a uniquely Russian technique whereby images are applied to glass with oil paint mixed with Vaseline. Movement is achieved by wiping out the images and repainting them.

A third category, as demonstrated by *Twelfth Night* and *The Tempest*, involves puppets incorporating four centuries of Russian animation. The star of *Barbie* dolls, with tiny ball and socket joints within their metal "skeletons", they can be articulated with minute accuracy. Caliban has been made to look like a cross between a football hooligan and a bulldog, and Malvolio a red-nosed buffoon with a long body like a pod of peas. Prospero has white hair and green skin.

The Prince of Wales, president of the Royal Shakespeare Company, has welcomed "this pioneering project" and the fact that it will bring Shakespeare's "great wisdom, insight and all-encompassing view of mankind to many millions".

The project arose after producers from S4C, the Welsh Channel 4, approached the Soyuzdetfilm studios in Moscow, established after the second world war as the state animation house. The series will also be shown on S4C.

MacMillan mourned by world of ballet

BY ALISON ROBERTS
ARTS REPORTER

THE arts world yesterday paid tribute to the internationally acclaimed choreographer, Sir Kenneth MacMillan, who died at the Royal Opera House on Thursday night during a revival of one of his ballets, *Macbeth*.

It was made clear that *Carousel*, the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical choreographed by Sir Kenneth and currently in rehearsal, will open at the National Theatre in December as planned. Its director, Nicholas Hytner, said that the cast had spent four of the most exciting weeks of their lives working with Sir Kenneth. "We shall continue to rehearse *Carousel* and make it our mission to show that he was at the pinnacle of his great creative powers," he said.

Anthony Dowell, the Royal Ballet director and former principal dancer, for whom Sir Kenneth created many roles, said that his death was a "tragic loss", adding: "He had been a part of the Royal Ballet for so long and it's very hard to come to terms with the fact that we have lost this major creative genius."

Jeremy Isaacs, general director of the Royal Opera House, who went on stage on Thursday to tell a stunned audience that Sir Kenneth had died of a heart attack, paid tribute to the creator of "masterwork after masterwork". He said: "Kenneth MacMillan extended both the language of dance, and the subject matter of classical ballet. He is irreplaceable, but his work will live for ever."

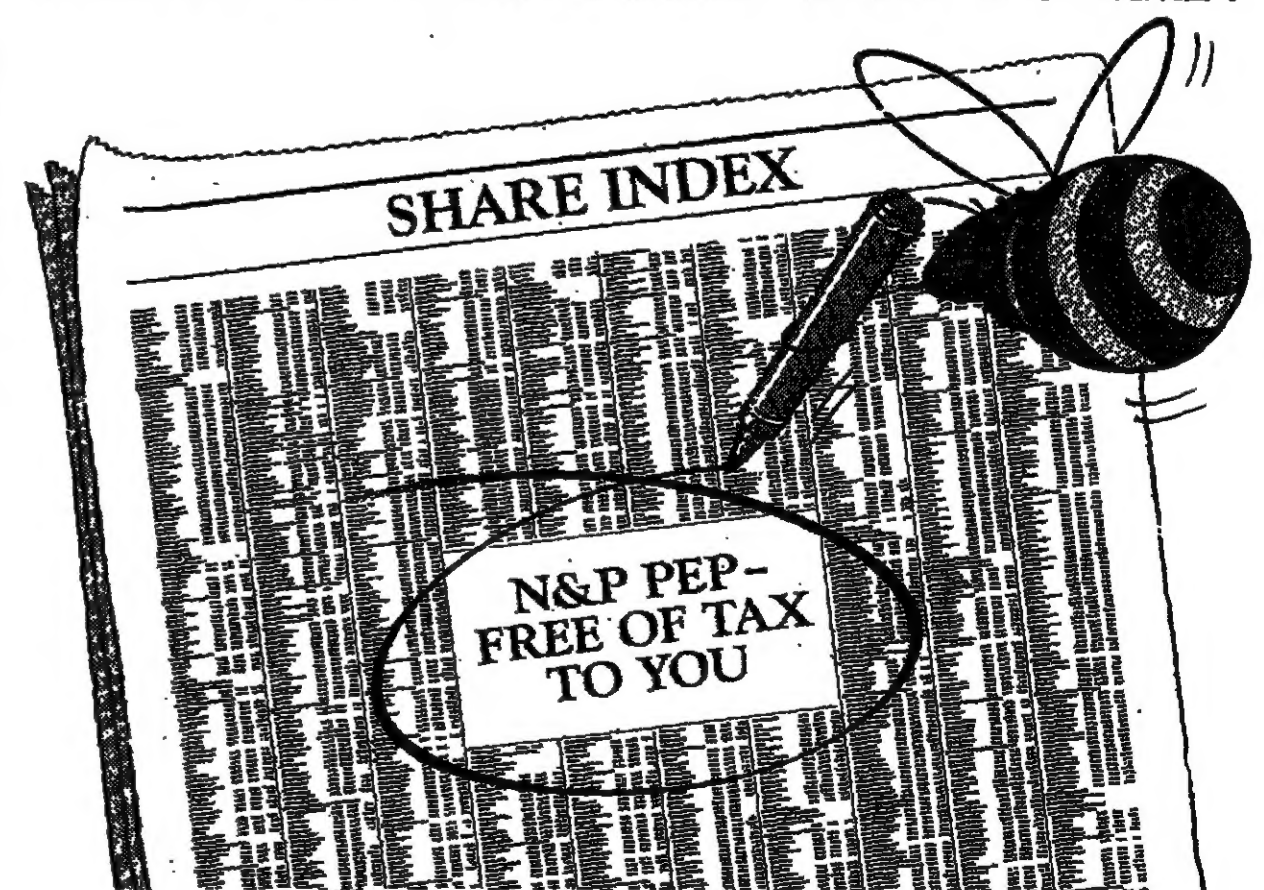
The founder of the Royal Ballet, Dame Ninette de Valois, said that Sir Kenneth's "choreographic contribution to the repertoire of the Royal Ballet is a part of its roots that time will never loose". His ballets "now have a worldwide reputation", she said.

The former principal dancer of the Royal Ballet, Antonette Sibley, for whom one of Sir Kenneth's most famous works, *Manon*, was created, said: "We are shocked and sad because we thought we had at least another 20 years with him."

Obituary, page 15

*N&P UK Income Fund - first phase in the Microcap Unit Trust UK Equity Income series for 1991 for Tax Year Performance to end 09/11. Source: Microcap Unit Trust Ltd. The fund is an approved representative of N&P Unit Trust Management Ltd, which is regulated in the conduct of investment business by the Securities and Investments Board. The fund is an approved representative of N&P Unit Trust Management Ltd, which is regulated in the conduct of investment business by the Securities and Investments Board. The fund is an approved representative of N&P Unit Trust Management Ltd, which is regulated in the conduct of investment business by the Securities and Investments Board.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Surprise, surprise

IF George Bush manages a John Major next week, it will be the best joke this campaign has played on America so far. It would represent the last



of many triumphs of the American political establishment in a year that was supposed to illustrate the victory of the opposite...

Andrew Sullivan dissects one of the most surprising election campaigns ever - in *The Sunday Times News Review*, tomorrow

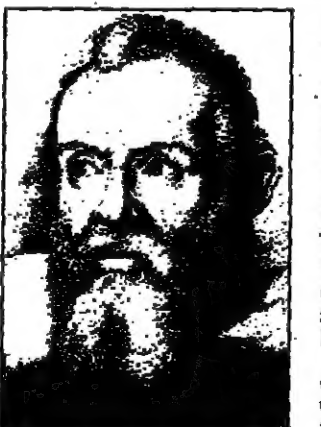
Galileo's star will shine once again in God's heaven

FROM PHILIP WILLIAN IN
ROME AND NIGEL HAWKES

MORE than 359 years after he was condemned by the Inquisition, the astronomer Galileo is expected to be rehabilitated today by Pope John Paul II. While it has taken the church three and a half centuries to admit it was guilty of an injustice, the special Vatican commission set up by the Pope to examine the affair has galloped to a verdict in a mere 13 years.

Today the commission, headed by French Cardinal Paul Poupard, will present its findings to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, and the Pope is expected to deliver a major address on science and religion, the topic of a forthcoming papal encyclical.

Galileo Galilei, who died in 1642, was condemned for his support of the theories of Copernicus - like the Pope, a Pole - who explained the motions of the planets by assuming that the Sun, and not the Earth, lay at the centre. The denunciation of the Earth offended conservatives in the church, who preferred the Ptolemaic view of the solar system and persuaded Pope Pius V to declare Copernicanism a heresy in 1616. Galileo was silenced, but in 1624 he obtained permission from a new Pope, Urban VIII,



Galileo: forced to renounce his belief

to write about both systems, so long as he did so in a neutral fashion.

His masterpiece, *Dialogue on the Two Chief World Systems*, was published in 1632. In the book, two people present their conflicting views, one representing Ptolemy and the other Copernicus. Pope Urban was persuaded that Simplicio, the Ptolemaic supporter, was a deliberate caricature of himself, and ordered a prosecution.

Eleven theologians from the Vatican's Holy Office declared Galileo's position "an absurd and false proposition in philosophy and formally heretical, that the Sun

is at the centre of the world and unmovable".

Galileo was brought before the Inquisition and ultimately ordered to recant and accept that the Earth was stationary. Old, sick, and threatened with torture, he agreed. The Pope seems to have doubted the justice of the verdict, as he commuted the sentence of imprisonment and instead ordered Galileo into house arrest on his estate near Florence.

There he stayed for the last eight years of his life, under ecclesiastical surveillance but still able to pursue his scientific work.

The Vatican quietly dropped its astronomical error in 1823 when Pope Pius VIII authorised the publication of a book by Giuseppe Settele, a priest, which acknowledged the correctness of Galileo's view.

Pope John Paul II, who has made an improvement in relations between the church and science one of the goals of his pontificate, has publicly admitted the church's error on several occasions. During a visit to Galileo's birthplace of Pisa in 1989 he praised the astronomer's "greatness" and said his scientific work had been "initially imprudently opposed".

Leading article, page 13

BT 
Get through to someone

Confrontation over public expenditure ceiling

Lamont threatens ministers with higher interest rates

By JILL SHERMAN, POLITICAL CORRESPONDENT

NORMAN Lamont has warned cabinet ministers that not only would early interest rate cuts be ruled out if they failed to meet the £244.5 billion public expenditure ceiling, but that rates could actually rise.

The Chancellor's threat, part of the wheeling and dealing which attends the spending round, follows signs that ministers are not prepared to accept the swingeing cutbacks in budgets which were proposed by the Chancellor on Thursday. It is understood that many ministers were appalled by the programme which the special EDX spending committee has presented to the cabinet.

Mr Lamont yesterday tried to dampen speculation about early interest-rate cuts or a "cure-all" Autumn Statement, and said that he would put up interest rates if he were forced to do so. Although the prime minister told the 1922 committee on Thursday night that

the statement would contain a package of measures to boost the economy, Mr Lamont was more cautious about spending. "We are not casting aside our commitment to continue the battle against inflation. We are not going to be careless, we are not going to just slash interest rates," he said.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, he said: "I have had 2 per cent off interest rates. I want to keep that 2 per cent. I don't want to have to put up interest rates unless I am forced to do so."

He underlined the importance of keeping a tight control on public spending to achieve lower interest rates in the medium term. "You can't spend your way out of a recession... we have allowed spending and borrowing to rise in this recession, we can't allow it to rise further."

Cabinet ministers were given only one set of spending cutbacks to consider by the EDX committee, although ele-

ments within that programme can be changed. Some ministers are now preparing alternative submissions from their own department in an attempt to protect priorities.

Although a virtual freeze on public-sector pay, with a ceiling set between 0 and 2 per cent, has been generally accepted, ministers are said to be angry about proposals to cut back benefits, central government grants and programmes in health, education and defence.

Treasury sources yesterday indicated that a freeze in benefits was unlikely to be accepted, although less than inflation rises in some benefits, with the possible taxation of invalidity benefit—the one untaxed contributory benefit—was still a front runner.

While some ministers have been pressing for tax increases as a way to protect capital projects without pushing up public borrowing, basic income tax rates are not likely to

be affected. However, Treasury sources have not ruled out an increase in national insurance contributions or a temporary increase in the higher rate of tax if the spending figures fail to add up. Speculation about changes in mortgage tax relief to boost the housing market were discounted.

Labour yesterday accused the Chancellor of being bankrupt of ideas to lift Britain out of the recession as it launched a national campaign for recovery. "What the country is looking for are practical measures to take us out of the recession. There was not one new initiative on employment, investment, or on infrastructure to help the construction industry," said Gordon Brown, shadow chancellor, who is expected to announce details of Labour's recovery package in the next few days. John Smith, the Labour leader, is to launch his campaign tour on Monday by visiting miners in Durham.



Mind's eye: Kathleen Turner at work for the BBC in London yesterday re-creating for a new-year serial the character of Chicago private detective V.I. Warshawski, which she first played in a Radio 4 drama last year

Time for rethink on tax-guzzler services

The Chancellor faces an uphill task to control public spending. The weight of history is against him and a fundamental change is needed, argues Tony Travers

The Chancellor is still trying to make next year's public spending add up to £244.5 billion. This was the figure set earlier this year for 1993-4. Once set, ministers have decreed that it must be adhered to. Departmental bids, it is alleged, exceeded the magic total by £14 billion.

Mr Lamont has inherited a mass of apparently unstoppable provision and faces annual demands for new spending on a range of new services.

Look back at the 1980s. Although the rhetoric of the times lambasted the public sector and all its works, no central or local government services were abandoned. True, the utilities were privatised, though in a way that ensured that households noticed little change in the provision of telephones, electricity, gas and water.

There were a few decisions to trim public provision, though the relatively tiny scale of change achieved served only to stress how far the bulk of provision survived. Eye tests, dental provision, prescriptions, housing subsidies and student support were trimmed. This amounted to a feeble death-by-a-thousand-cuts approach rather than a fundamental rethink of public provision. The core of tax-guzzling services, such as education, health, social services and the police guzzled on.

Statistics support this claim. Between 1979-80 and 1991-2, real terms current spending by local government—most of it on teachers, police, social workers and firefighters—rose by about 30 per cent. Over the same period, economic growth was just over 20 per cent. In most years, spending on services rose in line with national income.

Council spending was increasingly controlled by Whitehall in the latter part of the 1980s. If the government was taking more and more control, surely local spending on education and so on would fall away. The truth is that even as the government's grip tightened around local au-

thorities, public demands for services, and market-induced pay pressures, have forced Whitehall to maintain or increase local public services.

The government, despite its self-proclaimed radicalism, has had to concede to a public which wants to keep every public library, every uneconomic inner city school and every village bobby.

On the positive side, the government made a number of significant savings during the 1980s by initiatives such as bus deregulation, competitive tendering and improving council efficiency.

But most of these savings were one-off and were more than matched by ministers legislating for government provision, helped by media panic in the cases of Listeria hysteria (Food Safety Act) and child abuse (Children Act).

From a local authority's point of view, the consumers of their services have a reasonable expectation that, for example, provision at a school will improve at broadly the same rate as in the homes of most of the pupils. Moreover, teachers must be paid the rate for the job. In the late 1980s, the government had to sanction large pay rises to keep teachers' pay competitive and tackle staff shortages in many specialisms.

If the public sector is unsustainable, how can the Chancellor hope to start growth, eg promoting infrastructure projects, without exceeding the £244.5 billion limit? The short-term answer has been provided by demands for a public-sector pay freeze in 1993.

In the longer term, public-sector pay will inexorably rise again in line with national income. Mr Lamont has shown no new insights in reducing the scope of the public sector.

The sooner we all come to understand the relentless and unstoppable pressures for public spending, the sooner we can decide whether we can. □ The author is a director of research at the London School of Economics

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BT

Funding agency will replace local education authorities in grant-maintained sector

Patten unveils more bureaucracy to run opt-out schools

John Patten's education bill will create a new bureaucracy for opted-out schools as local education authorities wither

By MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

A POWERFUL new bureaucracy to take control of education as schools opt out of council control is proposed in a bill put before parliament by John Patten, the education secretary, yesterday.

The foundation of this structural revolution will be the Funding Agency for Schools, which is to assume increasing responsibility for management of the expanding grant-maintained (GM) sector. Mr Patten, who expects to gain 44 new powers from the bill, said yesterday that 472 schools had already received approval to leave local authority control, giving force to the government's target of 1,500 GM schools by April 1994.

The new agency or its sister organisation, the Schools Funding Council for Wales, will take over the payment of grants and financial monitoring of GM schools from the education department. A new common funding formula, to be agreed by 1994, will be introduced gradually as the number of grant-maintained schools in each area increases.

The funding agency, to have ten to 15 members appointed by the education secretary, will also gain powers over the

allocation of places and admissions in a local authority once 10 per cent of its pupils are taught at GM schools. The bill requires the funding agency to co-operate with local authorities in the provision of school places until 75 per cent of pupils are in the GM sector, when full responsibility will go to the agency.

Mr Patten will be able to delegate other powers to the agency, including the rights to alter a school's articles of government, to approve a change in its character and to order its closure.

A location has yet to be agreed for the agency, but regional offices are expected to be set up as more schools opt out. The bill says that the cost of the agency will be met by savings in the education department, the Welsh Office, and local education authorities, as well as by the removal of surplus places in schools.

Local authorities will continue to oversee provision for children with special needs, psychological evaluation and transport, but will be allowed to sell other goods and services to grant-maintained schools only for a two-year period. Mr Patten told the Commons

select committee on education this week that councils might eventually amalgamate education and social services.

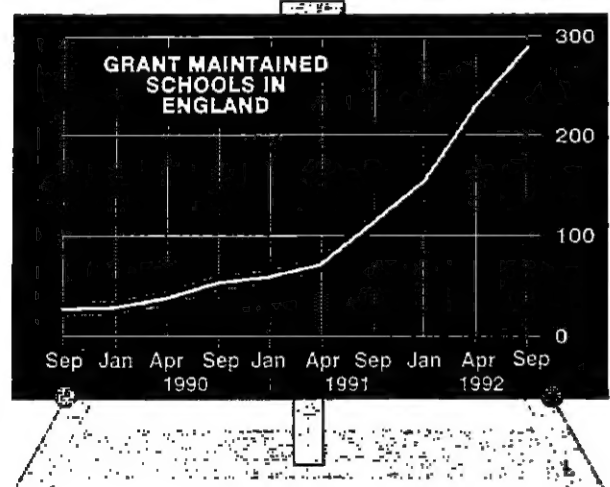
The bill, due for its second reading on November 9, will empower the education secretary to replace first governors, the core governors who form the majority on the governing body of grant-maintained schools. Ministers hope this will prevent a re-enactment of the protracted dispute at Stratford School this year, in which a group of Asian governors battled for control with the head teacher.

Mr Patten also intends to reduce dramatically the number of surplus places from 1.5 million to 700,000 and will seek powers to direct local authorities to remove surplus capacity. Their plans will be referred to public enquiries, to which the education secretary would submit his own proposals.

In spite of pressure from some Tory radicals to remove it, the parental ballot continues to be the cornerstone of the government's campaign to encourage schools to opt out. The bill includes measures to speed up the application procedure, removing the requirement for governors to pass a second resolution seeking grant-maintained status.

Groups of small primary schools will be able to opt out in clusters, with a single co-ordinating governing body, enabling the group to share costs. Voluntary bodies, such as churches, will be able to set up grant-maintained schools, with the funding agency providing 85 per cent of building costs. This provision is expected to smooth the path to the opening of state-funded Muslim schools.

Oxford's dark side, page 12
Leading article, page 13



Crafting a new system: John Patten's proposals would clear the way for Muslims to set up state schools

Outsiders to give governors stark choice

By MATTHEW D'ANCONA, EDUCATION CORRESPONDENT

FAILING schools that do not respond to local authority remedies will be taken over by outsiders and given the stark choice between closure and opting out under plans published in yesterday's bill.

When a school is judged by inspectors to "require special measures", the local authority will have the right to appoint additional governors and suspend the school's right to run its own budget. If these measures fail, the education secretary will move in an education association, a temporary body of at least five outside managers, to prepare the school for grant-maintained status without parental ballot.

The devolution of a whole chapter of the bill to the so-called "hit squads" underlines Mr Patten's determination to crack the nut of failing schools in spite of criticisms that the new system will rob many

parents of the right to vote on opting out. The new arrangements, reflecting the education secretary's belief that low standards usually reflect poor leadership, have the strong backing of the prime minister, who unveiled them in a speech to the Adam Smith Institute this summer.

In one of the bill's few amendments to July's white paper, the government now proposes to widen the associations' area of responsibility to include voluntary schools. The bill will also enable each association to set up committees to discharge particular responsibilities.

The first round of visits carried out by the revamped inspectorate under Professor Stewart Sutherland next year will be arranged to cover as many failing schools as possible and Mr Patten has referred to a "little list" of those

which will be assessed as a matter of urgency. Schools that fail to meet the deadline set for reform will be taken over by an association, which will perform a role similar to that of a governing body in an opted-out school, including responsibility for funds.

The association, employed directly by the education department, will also have the power to hire and fire staff, propose changes to a school's character and change its articles of government. Its final task will be to recommend that the education secretary close the school or transfer it to the grant-maintained sector.

Chris Adamson, education chairman of the Association of London Authorities, welcomed the government's interest in failing schools but said such measures could be carried out only in a spirit of partnership with local author-

ties. "We shall be seeking amendments which will give local authorities more financial powers and staffing where schools are identified as at risk," he said.



Sutherland: to visit failing schools

New body to supervise national testing

RAISING standards in the classroom is to be the responsibility of the new School Curriculum and Assessment Authority, which is to supervise national curriculum tests and syllabuses if yesterday's education bill is enacted (Matthew d'Ancona writes).

Taking over the work of the National Curriculum Council and the School Examinations and Assessment Council, the authority will be under ministerial pressure to raise public confidence in the examination system after the recent furore over GCSE standards. It will work closely with the new independent inspectorate and the National Council for Vocational Qualifications.

Mr Patten continues his fight against truancy, begun at the Home Office, with proposals to enforce attendance, soon to be a key indicator in school league tables. Councils will gain powers to take legal action against parents of persistent truants, and fines will be imposed.

Although the thrust of the bill is to coax schools out of council control, local education authorities will remain responsible for assessing pupils with special educational needs, making statements on them and other arrangements for special needs provision. An independent tribunal will be set up to hear parental appeals against decisions, and council-run or grant-maintained schools mentioned in a pupil's statement of special need will be required to admit the child.

The bill confounds predictions of a charter for selection and does little to advance the white paper's intention to promote subject specialisation. Grant-maintained schools will still have to seek ministerial approval for a formal change of character to become selective. The first to seek it, Castle Hall school, in West Yorkshire, was rejected.

Ministers remain sympathetic to schools wishing to specialise. An education department ruling released yesterday cleared the way for schools to select up to 10 per cent of pupils on the basis of non-academic ability.

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£50,000+	6.25	—	6.05	6.30	—	6.10
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£5,000+	6.20	6.35	4.25	5.30	5.45	3.40
£500+	6.00	6.15	4.05	5.10	5.25	3.20
Monthly Income Option						
£50,000+	7.35	7.50	5.50	6.40	6.55	4.40
£25,000+	7.05	7.20	5.20	6.10	6.25	4.10
£10,000+	6.70	6.85	4.85	5.80	5.95	3.80
£5,000+	6.35	6.50	4.45	5.45	5.60	3.45
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CARDCASH						
£2,000+	2.00	2.01	1.50	1.51	2.00	2.01
£500+	1.50	1.51	1.13	1.13	1.50	1.51
£50+	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
PAID-UP SHARE						
£250+	1.50	1.51	1.13	1.13	1.50	1.51
£50+	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
DEPOSIT						
£250+	1.50	1.51	1.13	1.13	1.50	1.51
£50+	1.00	1.00	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00
GUARANTEED RESERVE MATURED FUNDS ACCOUNT						
£10,000+	6.60	—	4.95	—	6.60	—
£2,000+	5.90	—	4.25	—	5.90	—
CLOSED ISSUES						
Instant Xtra	5.50	—	4.13	—	5.10	—
£10,000+	5.00	—	3.75	—	4.60	—
£5,000+	4.75	—	3.50	—	4.40	—
£2,000+	4.25	—	3.19	—	4.10	—
Monthly Savings						
7 Day Xtra	3.00	3.01	2.25	2.26	3.00	3.01
28 Day Xtra	3.15	3.16	2.38	2.39	3.15	3.16
Special Investment Account (1st Issue)	3.30	3.33	2.63	2.65	3.30	3.33
Special Investment Account (2nd Issue)	3.00	3.03	2.25	2.26	3.00	3.03
5 Year Term Share	3.50	3.53	2.63	2.65	3.50	3.53
Subsistence Share	1.45	1.46	1.09	1.09	1.45	1.46
Matured Subscription Share	1.45	1.46	1.09	1.09	1.45	1.46

Trinity Road, Halifax

HALIFAX

5th October 1992

Pupil's GP censured for giving her the Pill

THE parents of a 15-year-old prescribed contraceptive pills at Marlborough College won their battle against the school's GP yesterday when Dr Barney Rosedale was formally censured after an enquiry by the Wiltshire Family Health Services Authority.

The girl's stepfather, Rob Andrews, and her mother, Ann, of Marlborough, Hereford and Worcester, lodged a complaint against Dr Rosedale after discovering that their daughter had been put on the Pill without their knowledge. She and her boy friend, aged 17, were later expelled after being found in his bedroom.

Mr and Mrs Andrews made the complaint on the grounds that their daughter was prescribed pills bearing another girl's name. The enquiry ruled that Dr Rosedale was responsible for the sanatorium staff member who issued a third person's pills to the girl.

Dr Rosedale received a formal warning for breach of contract. A copy of the enquiry report will be sent to Virginia Bottomley, health secretary.

Mr Andrews, 42, who received details of the enquiry's outcome, said yesterday: "It has meant a lot of grief to get this far. The only gratifying news from all this is that we have aired the issue."

He said that boarding schools could not turn a blind eye to girls being given contraception and then expel them when school rules were broken. He hoped that schools would now realise the need for closer links between parents, schools and doctors, and better sex education for pupils.

Marlborough, which charges £11,325 a year, has suffered a series of sex and drugs scandals. David Cope, 47, the headmaster, announced last month that he would resign next summer. Dr Rosedale, who took a three-month sabbatical from Marlborough ten days ago, was not available for comment. Wiltshire Family Health Services Authority said that the doctor had one month to decide whether to appeal against any decision.

Freed Britons return home

TWO Britons released early by the Egyptian authorities after being jailed for 25 years each for drug-smuggling flew home yesterday. Maureen Paleschi, 53, a divorced mother-of-two, and Paul Collett, 44, were both released on medical grounds.

The move came after a meeting on Saturday in Cairo between John Major and Egypt's President Mubarak. Mr Major had promised to raise the cases while he was in Egypt for the 50th anniversary of the battle of El Alamein.

He had previously been contacted about Ms Paleschi's case by Frank Cook, Labour MP for Stockton North, who said he was "very, very happy" at the outcome. Ms Paleschi, from Yarm, near Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland, always pro-

tested her innocence after being arrested with her sister, Marion Arnold, on their arrival at Cairo airport from Pakistan in February 1987.

A wooden elephant in their possession was found to contain 11lb of heroin, but the women claimed they had no knowledge of the drug. They said they had been duped into carrying the elephant by an Egyptian friend, Mohammed Niaz, who was convicted with Ms Paleschi. She said she had been tricked by Niaz after falling in love with him.

The charges against Mrs Arnold, from Fareham, Hampshire, were dropped in October that year and she was released. But Ms Paleschi was tried and convicted in January 1988 of attempting to smuggle £375,000 worth of heroin

into Egypt and sentenced to 25 years with hard labour.

Her appeal against conviction was turned down by Egypt's highest court in March 1989. Mr Collett, from Birmingham, was jailed for 25 years in 1984 for drug-smuggling. He and Ms Paleschi were flown back to RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire, on Thursday night by RAF jet.

Yesterday Ms Paleschi was thought to be going to stay with her sister, said to be living in Scotland. Mr Collett was understood to have had a reunion with his mother. Prisoners Abroad, which had supported them and worked for their release on humanitarian grounds, said it was "delighted" that they were back home.

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5/11/92

Drugs suspect shown secret telex

Customs officer jailed for tipping off lover's father

By A Staff Reporter

LOVE drove a young customs officer to breach the Official Secrets Act and tip off a suspected drug-smuggler that he was being watched, an Old Bailey judge was told yesterday.



Hollywell breached the Official Secrets Act

Excise telexes and alerting the suspect to the surveillance would help him get to know the suspect's step-daughter, Nigel Peters, for the prosecution said.

Hollywell, of Sheerness, Kent, did become the girl's boy friend, but was later arrested with her father. He was jailed for nine months yesterday after admitting disclosing confidential and restricted information — an offence under Section 4 of the Official Secrets Act 1989 — between July 23 and September 30 last year.

Mr Justice Swinton Thomas told Hollywell: "Not only were you in a position of trust, but a high and particular degree of trust was placed in you — and you betrayed it."

Mr Peters said Hollywell joined Customs and Excise in 1989 and was promoted later that year to administrative officer, the equivalent of a police constable. He was served with, and signed, a copy of the Official Secrets Act.

His job, which involved searching boats and cars at Sheerness and Ramsgate, gave him access to confidential telexes. He came across one that warned that the suspected drug-smuggler might return from Europe with drugs. It listed registration numbers of vehicles he was thought to be using. Customs men were instructed in the telexes to make routine checks, but not to alert the man that he was under suspicion.

After his arrest last November, Hollywell said that he knew the man was "a bit of a dodgy character", but he initially denied passing information. Eventually, he admitted informing the suspect that customs staff at ports had been asked to watch for him. He said he had also handed over the registration numbers given in the telexes.

Hollywell received no financial reward for what he did, Mr Peters said, although he claimed he was offered cash.

The judge made an order under the Contempt of Court Act forbidding publication of the suspect's name or other information.

Peter King, for the defence, said Hollywell's interest in the man's step-daughter, rather than money, caused his actions. "Stupidly, he provided the information to ingratiate himself with one daughter in the hope that he could get to know her sister better," Mr King said. "He invites you to accept that he did not have the foresight to realise the implications."

Mr Justice Swinton Thomas said: "It is undoubtedly a tragedy to see a young man like you, who has up until now been of good character and held down a responsible position, pleading guilty to an offence such as this."

Hollywell might not have appreciated the gravity of what he had done, the judge added, but it involved a breach of trust and imprisonment was "inevitable".

Scientists net toxic killer from the skies

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor



Feathered fiend: a poisonous hooded pitohui

AN ORANGE and black songbird found in the jungles of New Guinea has become the first bird proved by scientists to be poisonous.

The hooded pitohui's defence mechanism, powerful enough to kill a mouse in minutes, was discovered by accident by American scientists trying to catch birds of paradise, according to John Dumbacher, of the University of Chicago. Several of the birds became entangled in nets. "We were trying to release them as quickly as possible, but they were able to cut our hands with their sharp beaks and claws," he says. When he licked his wounds, his mouth began to tingle and go numb.

He and other researchers caught more pitohui and put feathers on their tongues. The reaction was immediate. "The toxin caused numbness, burning and sneezing on contact," he reports in this week's *Science* magazine.

The toxin, found in the bird's feathers, skin and flesh, contains homobatrachotoxin, one of the most powerful

ful natural toxins. Only one other creature produces it, the poison-dart frog of South America, used by Amerindians on poison arrows.

One pitohui contains enough poison to kill quite a few frogs, Mr Dumbacher says. "If you delivered it to a human, I suspect there is enough toxin in one bird to do some serious damage."

Three types of pitohui, the hooded, the variable and the rusty, were tested, with the hooded variety the most toxic. The poison is probably used as a defence against predators such as snakes and hawks, which attack many songbirds in New Guinea but tend to leave the pitohui alone. Other birds have copied the hooded pitohui's distinctive colours in an attempt to share the same defence.

Although a surprise to the scientists, the unpleasant effects of eating pitohui are well-known to New Guinea natives, who describe it as a "rubbish bird", Mr Dumbacher adds.

Feather report
Weekend, page 3

Promoter loses boxing libel case

By A Staff Reporter

THE boxing promoter Frank Warren lost his libel action yesterday against his former protégé Terry Marsh, who had claimed in a television interview that Mr Warren allowed him to sign a contract for a fight knowing that he was suffering from epilepsy.

A High Court jury agreed that the allegation was defamatory, but could not agree on whether it was true. It also decided that Mr Warren had consented to the broadcast of the interview, by Thames Television in January 1989.

Mr Warren, 40, of Tewin, Hertfordshire, faces £100,000 costs. He is considering an appeal. He told the court that he knew nothing about Mr Marsh's epilepsy until he saw it reported in a newspaper.

Outside the court, he said: "Obviously I am disappointed the jury found it was defamatory but could not decide who was telling the truth. But if he [Mr Marsh] says it again, we will be back here tomorrow. I feel he is telling lies. There is no reason for our paths to cross in the future. I was never friends with him, I was his manager."

Mr Marsh, 34, of Wickford, Essex, had denied libel. He claimed that the words were true, that Mr Warren had consented to the pre-recorded programme going out, and that Mr Warren was not entitled to any damages.

Mr Marsh was a former fireman who became world light welterweight champion in 1987 under Mr Warren's management. Two years ago, he was tried and acquitted of attempting to murder Mr Warren, who was shot at close range in the street.

RUC chief condemns bombing of houses

FROM EDWARD GORMAN IN BELFAST

SIR Hugh Amessley, chief constable of the RUC, yesterday accused the IRA of an "outrageous unnecessary and wanton attack", after a bomb devastated scores of houses and a police station just north of Belfast.

Sir Hugh, visiting the scene outside Glengormley police station, where emergency services were carrying out repairs to almost 100 houses, said the bombing served no purpose.

"It's not only stupid, it's moronic," Sir Hugh said. "It has my utter condemnation as do all these bombings which, in effect, attack all sections of the community without any purpose."

His comments came as police announced a man was being questioned in Belfast about the attack. The bomb, which injured 13 people including two police officers, one of whom suffered serious facial injuries, exploded just after 1am yesterday morning, about 15 minutes after an IRA warning had been received.

Police had already been clearing the area before the warning was made after spotting an abandoned red transit van close to the police station. It was thought to have contained between 250 and 500lb of home-made explosive. According to police in Belfast the seriously injured officer was among those helping to clear local residents from their homes around the police station, and was hit by a projectile as he ushered an old woman away from the scene.

Police fear that the IRA may be stepping up its campaign in Belfast and elsewhere in Northern Ireland in the run-up to Christmas.

Miners vow to fight on as colliery closes

By KATE ALDERSON

THE miners of Grimethorpe colliery, Yorkshire, whose brass band won a national competition two weeks ago, yesterday lost their pit and accused British Coal of industrial sabotage.

As the men emerged from the pit after their last production shift they spoke of their bitterness and despair, but said the fight against closure would continue with the injunction the National Union of Mineworkers has applied for against British Coal.

British Coal has begun removing from the pit equipment used for developing new coal faces. The union fears that this could signal the removal of maintenance machinery essential to maintain the fabric of the mine during the 90-day consultation period set out by Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade. The High Court will decide the injunction on Tuesday.

Michael Glover, union branch treasurer, said: "Michael Heseltine said that we had a 90-day period in which the mine would be maintained, and we are going to fight for that." More than 160 miners have already taken

a voluntary redundancy but 630 worked yesterday.

Ken Hancock, branch secretary, claimed that British Coal had been trying to pressure men to accept the redundancy package. The miners were emotional as they spoke after digging the last coal from the 98-year-old pit. Johnny Wood, a miner for 18 years, said: "We worked for our country. A soldier gets rewarded with a medal — we get nothing, and some of the conditions we worked in were worse than the Somme."

Michael Haywood, 30, a miner since he left school aged 16, said: "There was a lot of men down the pit this morning very upset. They are putting a brave face on it, but we all know this is the end of the community we live in. I moved from South Kirkby pit two years ago because they promised me a future here."

About fifty women and children cheered and sang mining songs as the miners left the pit. "We are here to show support," Linda Pearce said. "But we're also here for our children. What is there left for them?"

Photograph, page 16

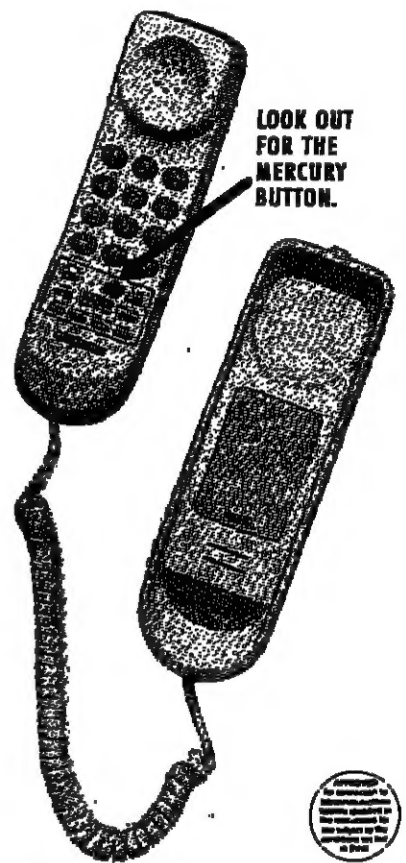
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Clarke's women end male tradition

By RICHARD FORD
HOME CORRESPONDENT

KENNETH Clarke has appointed a woman to be his principal private secretary, ending 200 years of male domination of this key post. Joan MacNaughton's arrival means that the home secretary has Whitehall's only private office to be staffed entirely by women, the Home Office said.

Mr Clarke said the only difference he had noticed since the last man departed was an improvement in his own behaviour. "I actually do behave slightly better with women than men. Not that I lose my temper or swear or anything like that," he said.

His all-female private office kept him alert and spurred him on, he said. "They find it easier to bully me than a man would and I find it more difficult to bully them. They don't take it."

In spite of Miss MacNaughton's breakthrough, Mr Clarke said there were still too few women civil servants in Whitehall's top jobs, particularly in areas associated with male-dominated employment. "It is a good thing that women are at the tough end of Whitehall doing work which concerns crime, policing and terrorism," he said.

"I always tell female political colleagues that if they want to get on they should avoid being pigeon-holed in areas like health and education."

Miss MacNaughton, 42, a physics graduate of Warwick University, worked on the implementation of the Criminal Justice Act, was director of the prison service's industries and farms, and helped to set up the Crown Prosecution Service.

Others in the private office are private secretaries Suzanne McCarthy, 43, and Lynn Helmuth, 30, and two assistant private secretaries Gillian Nicholson, 25, and Helen Murray, 29. Other colleagues included Tessa Keswick, the home secretary's political adviser and Margaret Newton, 59, manager of the home secretary's private office since 1968.

Yesterday, the Cabinet Office published a report on equal opportunities in the civil service that showed they made up almost half of the executive officer grade, the ranks of junior management. But the First Division Association, representing 10,700 senior civil servants, said there were only 48 women out of 632 people in the top three grades and only one permanent secretary - Barbara Mills QC, director of public prosecutions - in 33 departments surveyed.



The team, clockwise from Mr Clarke: Lynn Helmuth, Suzanne McCarthy, Tessa Keswick, Gillian Nicholson, Margaret Newton, Helen Murray and Joan MacNaughton

Charities seek wider powers to fight threat from national lottery

By ARTHUR LEATHLEY AND JULIA LLEWELLYN SMITH

LAWS on charitable lotteries may be relaxed to prevent a potential loss of income when the national lottery begins in 1994.

The government is exploring ways of giving charities more scope to run their own lotteries in an attempt to head off protests that charitable income will drop because of the national fund-raising project, which will be unveiled within the next six weeks.

One plan being considered is raising the maximum prize-money for charity lotteries from its present limit of £12,000. Other changes under consideration would involve simplifying arrangements by which charities obtain permission to run a lottery.

The new heritage department may face opposition from the Home Office in obtaining such relaxations but has won a concession from the Treasury that the lottery will be taxed at a rate lower than the 37 per cent duty imposed on football pools.

Robert Key, the heritage under-secretary of state, yesterday challenged the claim that public generosity would be "seriously undermined" and that charities could lose up to one third of their present income when the national

lottery starts by the end of 1994. He pointed to research showing that less than 4 per cent of income would be lost and cited his own close involvement in charities at a national level as proof that he would not allow fund-raising to be undermined.

Speaking at the Charities Aid Foundation annual conference in London yesterday, Mr Key also ruled out setting up a quango to distribute money from the national lottery. Twenty per cent of the proceeds are expected to go to charities. He said that would be shared out by a number of specialist organisations already in existence.

In the first indication of the government's plans for distributing proceeds, Mr Key said it was essential that the process had the confidence of those appealing for funds from the lottery. Formal discussions will take place shortly to decide which organisations should act as distributors for the sectors which will benefit from the lottery, such as sport, the arts, heritage and charities.

"It would be a mistake for the proceeds to be seen as unpredictable bounty, gold coins thrown to supplicants at the whim of an unaccountable body."

Nicholas Hinton, the director general of the Save The Children Fund, told the Charities Aid conference that the government was on "a hiding to nothing" with its plans for a national lottery.

Mr Hinton, who has been with Save The Children for eight years, said that charity chief executives had decided at a recent meeting that no charity was in favour of a lottery, because of fears of the divisive effect of some charities being chosen to benefit from the lottery above others.

"It's an award system and if you have to choose one prize-winner out of ten, you will please one and anger nine," he said. "We will have to set up the fiercest possible watchdog, to make sure that we have a hand in monitoring the distribution process."

Michael Brophy, the executive director of the Charities Aid Foundation, predicted: "When distribution starts in 1994 or 1995, there will be absolute mayhem." He said that grant-making organisations with experience of awarding funds to charities should be allowed to tender for the role.

Charities have expressed concern that they will lose financial support after the introduction of the European Common Market next year because lottery tickets from other European countries will be on sale in Britain.

Another fear is that people who buy national lottery tickets may no longer participate in smaller-scale fund-raising activities such as raffles, upon which many small charities depend.

Mr Brophy said: "I think the way to avoid this is not to mention charitable causes in association with the lottery. People should want to buy tickets because of the excitement and prizes, not because of where the money is going."

Earlier, Michael Jack, the Home Office minister with responsibility for the voluntary sector, told the conference that the distribution of lottery proceeds to charity would not replace government grants. "The government will continue to support the charitable and voluntary sector within the strains of its resources," he said.

Winner so cool, calm, collected

FROM EDWARD GORMAN
IRELAND CORRESPONDENT

IRELAND'S newest Lotto millionaire has astounded officials in Dublin by calmly collecting his prize almost two weeks late. The man, from Limerick, discovered ten days ago that he had won about £1.75 million, but decided to keep his winning ticket in his back pocket while he surveyed his local banks to find out which would give him the best interest rate on his jackpot.

Dave Curtin, public relations manager for the lottery, said yesterday: "He walked into the reception area yesterday, very cool and calm and collected, and said: 'I have the winning ticket here. I've come to claim my prize.' He told me no one other than his wife, not even his kids."

The claim ends a nationwide search for the winner of the second largest individual jackpot in the game's history. The Lotto computer traced the shop in Limerick where the winning ticket was sold, but media appeals failed to turn up its owner. If he had not come forward within 90 days, his winnings would have been put back into the pot.

The man told Lotto officials: "By nature, I'm a calm person and, although I was delighted, I have not lost any sleep."

Debtors protest at bailiffs' tactics

■ A review of the role of bailiffs should address the problems faced by thousands of Citizens Advice Bureaux clients

By RACHEL KELLY, PROPERTY CORRESPONDENT

MORE than 78,000 consumers have complained to Citizens Advice Bureaux this year about the threatening tactics and exorbitant expense of bailiffs. The use of bailiffs for debt collection is archaic and should be abolished, the national association of bureaux says.

The majority of the complaints are about collection of community charge and domestic rate debts. Of 162,000 complaints about community charges, 65,000 dealt with the use of bailiffs. The highest number of complaints were about the refusal of bailiffs to negotiate realistic instalments, followed by communication difficulties between clients and bailiffs.

The report cites the case of a man in Cambridgeshire on income support with a young child. He had community charge arrears of £114. Bailiffs removed a hi-fi, compact disc player and came chair. After the goods had been auctioned, he received a letter to say that he now owed £135 and that the bailiffs would advise the council to apply to have him committed to prison if he did not settle the balance within seven days.

Other complaints were about the use of bailiffs to

recover rent arrears and money owing in county and high court judgments. Local authorities, some of which previously renounced the use of bailiffs as inhuman, have started to use them as they come under pressure from the Audit Commission and others to reduce the level of rent arrears.

The report is timed to coincide with a review by the Lord Chancellor's department of the organisation and management of civil enforcement agents. The deadline for responses by concerned parties was yesterday.

Ann Abraham, chief executive of the association, said: "We are particularly concerned that bailiffs may in some cases exacerbate debt. While we welcome this review, we believe that only when the issues of multiple debt and alternatives to bailiffs are addressed will any inroads be made towards alleviating the distress suffered by huge numbers of CAB clients."

The report suggests that there should be no extension of bailiffs' powers to use force to enter debtors' homes, that bailiffs should always identify themselves and that all bailiffs' fees should be subject to statutory control.

Hundreds mourn stabbed girl

Parents and children packed a church in the East End of Sunderland yesterday for the funeral of Nicki Allen, who was found battered and stabbed to death in a disused building 23 days ago.

The city's normally redundant parish church, opened for the service, had all its 400 seats filled. Scores more stood and hundreds waited in the cold outside.

Many of the mourners were children, playmates and schoolfriends of Nicki, aged seven, of Wear Garth, Sunderland, and a lesson was read by Wendy Wright, her teacher at St John's and St Patrick's School. The words of Father Frank Gardner, who conducted the service, were mostly inaudible as babies cried and gurgled in the arms of their sad-faced mothers.

Police cleared of assault

PC Robert Huntley, 25, and Sergeant Richard Thompson, 34, both British Transport Police officers based at Ebury Bridge Station, southwest London, were cleared yesterday by Southwark Crown Court of beating up an Army cook after arresting him.

They had denied two charges of assault occasioning actual bodily harm and another of "doing acts intended to pervert the course of justice". Sgt Thompson was also acquitted on two charges of misconduct.

Sextem charge

Vincent Joseph Wood, 29, a sales representative of Leytonstone, east London, was remanded in custody for seven days when he appeared before Bow Street magistrates yesterday accused of possessing Semtex and conspiring to cause explosions.

Book banned

Robson Books agreed to withdraw from bookshops *Untold Story*, by the boxer Barry McGuigan, in settlement of a libel action brought in the High Court in Belfast by Barney Eastwood, the champion's former manager. Mr Eastwood waived damages.

Perjury enquiry

Police are investigating fresh allegations of perjury concerning Sonia Sutcliffe, wife of the Yorkshire Ripper, and a High Court hearing in May 1989 that resulted in her being awarded record libel damages against *Private Eye*.

Costly drink

Mark Goulding, an accountant and chief executive of Bradford City Football Club, who crashed his Saab Turbo on the way home from a fund-raising dinner, was fined £2,254 and banned for a year by Huddersfield magistrates for drinking and driving.

Price of history

An anonymous English bidder paid £13,200 at Christie's for the airline ticket that Neville Chamberlain, the British prime minister, used to travel to Munich for his meeting with Hitler in 1938.

Rape arrest

Police have arrested a man in connection with the rape of a Salvation Army officer at Stotfold, Bedfordshire, last Sunday. The woman had been walking home from a Methodist church service.

Hasty exit

Lunchtime customers escaped minutes before fire gutted the Little Chef restaurant at the Sampford Peverell junction of the M5 near Tiverton, Devon.

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Microchips block food bugs

By NICK NUTTALL, TECHNOLOGY CORRESPONDENT

THE likelihood of contaminated foods reaching the nation's dinner plates may be dramatically cut by a new computer system.

The system, developed by government-backed scientists and industry, can predict with a high degree of accuracy how levels of bacteria may build up and survive in a given food as it passes from the factory to consumers via corner shops or supermarkets.

Food Micromodel is the product of more than five years of research orchestrated by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Foods. It makes predictions using a vast scientific data base that links factors such as temperature and the acidity of a food with the likely rate of growth of bacteria such as salmonella. It is hoped that eventually predictions will be

able to take into account such factors as pressure and vacuum packing, as well as a wide range of preservatives.

Terry Roberts, head of microbiology at the Institute of Food Research in Reading, Berkshire, and one of the scientists involved in the scheme, said the system's development partly reflected the drive towards healthier, crisper and fresher foods with fewer preservatives. This has made it less acceptable to heat foods to high temperatures, freeze them, add high levels of salt and other substances. "The preparation of foods has been reduced to the limits of safety... which is why we need this system," Dr Roberts said.

Nicholas Soames, the food minister, praised the project as a first for Britain, and yesterday it was disclosed that

the European Community, under its Flair food research scheme, and several countries, including America, Singapore and Australia, were proposing to participate. The first phase of the development of the system, whose predictions will be available at six centres across the country, including the Campden Food and Drink Research Association, the ministry's Torry Research Station in Aberdeen and the Flour Milling and Baking Research Association in Chorleywood, Hertfordshire, will be complete in March 1994.

Food Micromodel, for which companies will be charged, will initially cover the effects of differing temperatures, acidities and salt levels for most of the main food poisoning bacteria.

Adie wins damages for libel

By A STAFF REPORTER



Adie: article said she was held in low esteem

THE television journalist Kate Adie received a public apology and undisclosed libel damages yesterday over a newspaper profile suggesting that her reputation as a tough and fearless reporter was a myth.

The High Court was told that the *Mail on Sunday* article, in September 1991, written by Paul Nathanson and headlined "Whatever happened to Kate Adie", would have left readers with the clear impression that the BBC no longer used Miss Adie, its chief news correspondent, where analytical reporting of big news stories was required, and that she was held in low esteem by her colleagues.

"This gravely defamatory attack on her character and

reputation was wholly without foundation and should never have been made," Bernard Simons, her solicitor, told the court. "Not surprisingly, it caused her considerable distress and embarrassment and she felt she had no option but to bring these proceedings to clear her name."

The newspaper, which will pay legal costs in addition to the damages, said it regretted that the profile was published and withdrew the allegations.

Miss Adie, who has worked for the BBC for more than 23 years, said after the trial hearing: "It is a good thing that the record has been put straight. I feel strongly about that because I am a journalist." She refused to disclose the amount of the damages.

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Yeltsin

Hope of Bun

Coalition hands

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Hell to pa

Yeltsin rallies support as extremist rivals gather strength



Yeltsin: may move to rule by decree

By ANNE McELVY IN MOSCOW
AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

PRESIDENT Yeltsin rallied support yesterday for his beleaguered government in the Russian provinces, defending his government in a week which has seen the banning of the opposition National Salvation Front, the outlawing of the paramilitary parliamentary guard, and a tougher stance towards the Baltic states.

Speaking in Astrakhan in southern Russia, Mr Yeltsin promised stabilisation early next year, but did not rule out the possibility that he would move to rule by decree if the challenges to his reform programme hardened.

The president has been sharply criticised by Baltic leaders for his decree, issued on Thursday, linking the withdrawal of Russian troops

to guarantees of human rights for former Russian military personnel in the three states. Nato said that it was concerned at the decision to postpone the pullout and urged Russia to resume its withdrawal forthwith.

Andrejs Krastins, the Latvian leader, said that the move "reflected the instability of power in Russia" and that Moscow's position on the Baltic states "changes every day with every twist and turn of the internal political situation". The decree is clearly intended to pacify the military, who have accused Mr Yeltsin of being too cautious in defending the interests of Russians in the former Soviet republics.

In Moscow, Boris Gromov, the deputy defence minister,

■ The Russian leader is being cornered by sundry enemies. But his supporters in the West are distracted at the very time his reforms are facing the gravest danger

said the withdrawal of Russian troops and equipment from the Baltic states could take up to seven years. The refusal of the three nations to allow deployment of fresh recruits from Russia to dismantle equipment was slowing the operation.

With the political atmosphere growing more frenzied as the powerful Congress of People's Deputies approaches, the Russian leader is being cornered by sundry enemies. Mr Yeltsin faces pressure from several sources, starting with the alliance of far left and far right, Western terminol-

ogy fails to cope adequately with the spectrum of Russian politics. The National Salvation Front includes former hardline communists, such as Victor Alksnis, who opposed President Gorbachev's reforms, nationalists such as Sergei Baburin, and power-mad mavericks such as the parliamentary chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov.

Dangerously for the government, they have put aside their differences to concentrate on battling against reforms. Both wings have Slavophile tendencies and distrust the West, the one

camp citing "Anglo-Saxon pro-Zionism", the other "capitalist imperialism". The result is the same desire to lead Russia off the course of integration into Western economic and security systems.

The strength of such groupings is their appeal to battered national pride and the simplicity of their message at a time when the population is not interested in fathoming political complexities. The weakness is their chaotic heterogeneity.

The Civic Union is an umbrella-group dominated by the military-industrial complex and its interests. Its main players are Arkadi Volosky, head of the industrialists' union, and Aleksandr Rutskoi, the ambitious vice-president, who last week indulged in the not entirely supportive observation that President Yeltsin's Russia was

"an economic and political rubbish dump".

Earlier this year, the union was seen as the hardline threat until the extremists showed their strength. Its aims are to stall privatisation and end the current strategy of fiscal and monetarist controls (backed by the International Monetary Fund and Western governments) in favour of investment in, and larger credits to, industry.

These aims, however, are closely linked to an understanding of Russia as a heavy industry-dominated, military power. Any rise in the influence of the union and its pragmatism conceals a political agenda which should worry the West. But a pact with the union may be the price Mr Yeltsin is forced to pay to keep power and stabilise his government.

Former President Gorb-

achev this week linked arms with Konstantin Borovoy, the multi-millionaire head of the Economic Freedom party — also an enemy of Mr Yeltsin. Mr Borovoy has lots of money and no influence abroad, while Mr Gorbachev has international sympathy in abundance but dwindling assets stripped by Mr Yeltsin. They may well support a Civic Union bid for power in the future.

The Russian population, particularly in the provinces, is more concerned with how it is going to get through the winter than how the government will survive it. Election year in America and the turbulence surrounding the Maastricht treaty in Europe have distracted the attention of the West from the fate of Russia at the very time that its reforms are facing the gravest danger.

Hope of Bundesbank rate cut recedes

Coalition ties Kohl's hands on tax rises

FROM ANATOL LIEVEN IN BONN

LEADERS of Germany's coalition parties yesterday ruled out any rise in German taxes before 1995. Earlier this week Helmut Kohl, the German chancellor, said that tax increases would be necessary by then or sooner if major cuts in government spending were not achieved.

In a move which is bound to disappoint Germany's partners, and makes a significant reduction of interest rates by the Bundesbank less likely, the coalition leaders accepted that a budget deficit, several billion marks higher than this year's level of DM38 billion (€15.3 billion), would be inevitable.

Theo Waigel, the finance minister and leader of the Bavarian Christian Social

Union, and two leading Free Democrats, Jürgen Möllemann, the economics minister, and Count Otto Lambdorff, the party chairman, have all spoken against early tax increases for fear of worsening the recession. The recession itself means that tax income is expected to drop by at least eight billion marks next year.

The opposition Social Democrats strongly criticised the coalition statement. A spokeswoman said the government is "fleeing into new debts because it lacks the strength to save money". However, the SPD itself and its trade union allies are bound to oppose many of the spending cuts which economists consider es-

senial, especially in the huge subsidies made to uncompetitive sectors such as coal mining and steel.

The public opposition of Herr Waigel and the Free Democrats to tax increases has been described as a "slap in the face" for Chancellor Kohl who declared on Monday that "the fat years are over" and that "the hour of truth" has come. However, he did not spell out what tax increases he considers necessary.

Herr Kohl has been criticised for his failure to warn Germans two years ago of the necessity of making sacrifices to pay for unification. During a speech this week in Düsseldorf, he said "the German people may ask, why am I saying this now?", to which the liberal weekly *Die Zeit* replied waspishly that what they are actually asking is "Why didn't you say it before?"

The course of the tax debate indicates the difficulty of achieving a German consensus on painful economic measures. The Christian Democrats might be able to unite behind higher taxes but the idea has to be accepted by the Free Democrats and Christian Socialists before it can be sold to the nation.

Herr Kohl's speech at Düsseldorf was delivered with his characteristic lack of flourish and rhetoric. Equally characteristic was the way in which he was able to secure his leadership of the party by undermining one of the men seen as a possible successor, Volker Rühe, the defence minister. Herr Rühe, contrary to expectation, was not elected as a deputy party chairman. Instead, Heinz Eggert, an east German and former dissident pastor, joined the four-member board.

Herr Kohl undoubtedly has deferred tax increases with the 1994 elections in mind. However, observers have predicted that they will result in a grand coalition between the CDU and SPD, perhaps with Herr Rühe as chancellor. It may be that only such a coalition would be able to bring in the kind of painful measures that Herr Kohl envisages but is too weak to call for directly.

Hiss trumpets his innocence

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

ALGER Hiss, the convicted perjurer and suspected Soviet spy, has held a press conference in New York to declare his "happiness, elation and joy" that his name had finally been cleared of the charges of espionage against him dating back to 1948.

Frail at 87 but still emphatically proclaiming his innocence, Mr Hiss said he had begun to fear that he would not be exonerated in his lifetime but believed "the truth would eventually come out".

The truth about Mr Hiss may be as elusive as ever, and the latest chapter in a mystery that has divided this country has sparked a fresh round of disagreement among historians, Soviet experts and Americans for whom the Hiss case is one of the definitive episodes of the Cold War.

Mr Hiss's latest defender has appeared in the shape of General Dmitri Volkogonov, the chairman of Russia's military intelligence archives, who issued a videotaped statement this week declaring that Soviet archives proved the accusations of spying against Mr Hiss were "completely

groundless." However, some historians in the West are suspicious of the passionate certainty with which the general has leapt to defend Mr Hiss. It would take years, they say, to search through all the relevant files.

Some American historians have learned to treat Russian claims over the contents of Soviet archives with caution, after President Yeltsin claimed evidence of Western prisoners of war in the country which have yet to be substantiated.



Hiss: cleared of spying by Russian general

Hell to pay over smoke ban

FROM CHARLES BREMER IN PARIS

Sartre may have been a misguided old phony, at least according to the fashionably revised version of history, but the existentialist French philosopher and writer got it right about his countrymen when he observed in his play *Hell* "L'enfer, c'est les autres" (Hell is other people).

The French government apparently forgot the line when it decided to change France in one go from the smokers' heaven of the European Community into its capital of medical correctness. That revolution arrives tomorrow. From midnight, nobody in the land of Gauloise fog is allowed to smoke in any common space, whether public transport, restaurant, cafe, or workplace, unless they are told they may do so in special areas. Offenders are to be referred to the nearest constable for a fine equivalent to £80 or even imprisonment. The method has worked well in civil-minded America

and Scandinavia but in France there has been a fierce outcry from smokers, police, philosophers, employers, and restaurateurs, who see the scheme as a strike by totalitarian zealots to deprive France of its hard-won liberties.

"This law illustrates for eternity the inimitable way of the Mitterrand regime," said *Le Quotidien de Paris* in a polemic that managed to haul in everything from Greek thinkers and the guillotine to Beirut and the Maastricht treaty.

For Henry Chapier, a television arts critic, "health dictatorship is being imposed on us. This law is just a comedy and it will serve only to set people against each other." Visions of a smoke Gestapo hounding law-breakers are particularly upsetting for the police, who fear an outbreak of civil

strife and *débauchage*, the ancient French practice of denouncing enemies to the authorities. "It's going to be like the Terror or the Occupation," said a police union spokesman. "Citizens are going to be at each other's throats, using the smoke law to settle personal accounts."

Big warning holes such as Aux Deux Magots, Sartre's Left Bank haunt, have already set aside areas for *les fumeurs impénitents*, but small cafes and some celebrated restaurants have proclaimed that they will resist to the last ashtray. "It's the final nail in the coffin of *les petits bistros* (the corner cafes)," said a spokesman for the cafe association.

But some calmer heads are predicting that the *Guerre du Feu*, as the press has dubbed it, will not take place. France has a fine history of ignoring its rulers' attempts to impose shock therapy.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Europe to increase Asia trade

THE troika of European Community foreign ministers, led by Douglas Hurd, agreed to expand trade and promote investment in Southeast Asia at a summit meeting in Manila with the Association of South-East Asian Nations (Michael Binyon writes).

The deal came in spite of earlier calls from the Portuguese for greater observance by Indonesia of human rights in East Timor. The summit omitted this question from the communiqué. All parties simply promised to continue their dialogue on human rights.

Trees polluted

Bonn: More than two thirds of trees in Germany have suffered damage as a result of acid rain and other pollution, the German Association for Environmental Protection has declared on the basis of the latest official figures.

Allen order

New York: A court ordered Woody Allen, the film director, not to contact the school of his adopted daughter Dylan. 7. Allen's estranged lover, Mia Farrow, has accused him of molesting the girl, but he has denied it (Reuters).

Peak reached

Tokyo: Six climbers of a Sino-Japanese expedition scaled the tallest unconquered mountain in the world, the 25,531 ft Namcha Barwa in Tibet, it was announced (Reuters).

Historian held

Victoria, Canada: David Irving, the British historian who claims the Nazi Holocaust has been exaggerated, faced deportation from Canada after being arrested while he was addressing a meeting (Reuters).

Final croak

Delhi: Dozens of frogs died after one swallowed a gold chain left by a woman by a river in Kerala, India. Her relatives caught the frogs and cut them open. The chain was found in the 68th frog (AP).

Nationwide's new rates for savers.

From 2nd November 1992

New rates for personal investors.

TESSA		Annual Tax Free Interest p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£8,400-£9,000	8.40%	£25,000 and over	8.40%
£9,000-£9,599	8.30%	£25,000-£29,999	8.30%
£9,600-£10,199	8.20%	£30,000-£34,999	8.20%
£10,200-£10,799	8.10%	£35,000-£39,999	8.10%
£10,800-£11,399	8.00%	£40,000-£44,999	8.00%

One Year Bond		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	8.30%	£25,000 and over	8.30%	£25,000 and over	8.30%
£25,000-£29,999	8.10%	£25,000-£29,999	8.10%	£25,000-£29,999	8.10%
£10,000-£24,999	8.00%	£10,000-£24,999	8.00%	£10,000-£24,999	8.00%
£5,000-£9,999	7.50%	£5,000-£9,999	7.50%	£5,000-£9,999	7.50%
£3,000-£4,999	6.50%	£3,000-£4,999	6.50%	£3,000-£4,999	6.50%

Monthly Income		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	7.60%	£25,000 and over	7.60%	£25,000 and over	7.60%
£25,000-£29,999	7.20%	£25,000-£29,999	7.20%	£25,000-£29,999	7.20%
£10,000-£24,999	6.60%	£10,000-£24,999	6.60%	£10,000-£24,999	6.60%
£5,000-£9,999	6.00%	£5,000-£9,999	6.00%	£5,000-£9,999	6.00%
£1,000-£4,999	5.50%	£1,000-£4,999	5.50%	£1,000-£4,999	5.50%

Capital Builder		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	7.70%	£25,000 and over	7.70%	£25,000 and over	7.70%
£25,000-£29,999	7.30%	£25,000-£29,999	7.30%	£25,000-£29,999	7.30%
£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%
£5,000-£9,999	6.10%	£5,000-£9,999	6.10%	£5,000-£9,999	6.10%
£1,000-£4,999	5.60%	£1,000-£4,999	5.60%	£1,000-£4,999	5.60%

Cash Builder		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£25,000 and over	7.00%	£25,000 and over	7.00%	£25,000 and over	7.00%
£10,000-£24,999	6.50%	£10,000-£24,999	6.50%	£10,000-£24,999	6.50%
£5,000-£9,999	5.80%	£5,000-£9,999	5.80%	£5,000-£9,999	5.80%
£2,000-£4,999	5.30%	£2,000-£4,999	5.30%	£2,000-£4,999	5.30%
£1-£1,999	4.80%	£1-£1,999	4.80%	£1-£1,999	4.80%

Smart 2 Save		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£1-£499	4.00%	£1-£499	4.00%	£1-£499	4.00%

Cash Builder terms and interest rates will apply for balances of £500 and over.

Note for all personal and business investors: All accounts except TESSA interest will normally be paid at the net rate after deduction of income tax at the basic rate, currently 25%. The net may be reclaimed from the Inland Revenue where the account holder's liability to tax is limited. Interest may be paid at the gross rate without deduction of tax to account holders who are eligible and register that they do not expect to be liable to income tax, and in certain other cases. All rates quoted are variable. Net rates have been rounded and are for illustrative purposes only. Rates correct at time of going to press. Withdrawals subject to branch and agency limits. Nationwide Building Society, Nationwide House, Fife Way, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN3 8NW.

Flee Account		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£25,000 and over	6.50%	£25,000 and over	6.50%	£25,000 and over	6.50%
£10,000-£24,999	5.50%	£10,000-£24,999	5.50%	£10,000-£24,999	5.50%
£5,000-£9,999	4.50%	£5,000-£9,999	4.50%	£5,000-£9,999	4.50%
£2,000-£4,999	3.50%	£2,000-£4,999	3.50%	£2,000-£4,999	3.50%
£500-£1,999	2.50%	£500-£1,999	2.50%	£500-£1,999	2.50%
£1-£499	1.50%	£1-£499	1.50%	£1-£499	1.50%

Customers with an account, other than a fixed rate investment account, that is no longer available to new investors, can transfer to equivalent accounts in our current product range immediately without penalty. Customers opening an account with a new investment, can transfer to any other account, or have their money back if they sell it within two weeks that the account does not meet their needs. Interest rates on accounts no longer available to new investors have also changed. Details will appear in the National Press on Monday 2nd November and will be available from branches.

TESSA: minimum age for eligibility 16 years. Only one TESSA per person. Term 5 years. Maximum investment limits are £3,000 in first year and £1,000 in subsequent 4 years subject to the overall limit of £9,000. Interest is subject to tax at the basic rate on termination prior to maturity for any reason other than death. TESSAs are subject to Inland Revenue regulations which may vary.

Interest paid annually on all accounts except Monthly Income where interest is paid monthly. Nationwide is a member of the Building Societies Ombudsman Scheme. Investors Protection Scheme and conforms to the Code of Banking Practice.

New rates for business investors.

Business Investor		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	7.70%	£50,000 and over	7.70%	£50,000 and over	7.70%
£25,000-£49,999	7.30%	£25,000-£49,999	7.30%	£25,000-£49,999	7.30%
£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%
£5,000-£9,999	6.20%	£5,000-£9,999	6.20%	£5,000-£9,999	6.20%
£2,000-£4,999	5.70%	£2,000-£4,999	5.70%	£2,000-£4,999	5.70%

Portfolio Investor		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	7.80%	£50,000 and over	7.80%	£50,000 and over	7.80%
£1-£49,999	7.60%	£1-£49,999	7.60%	£1-£49,999	7.60%

Asset Reserve		Gross p.a.		Net p.a.	
Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
£50,000 and over	7.70%	£50,000 and over	7.70%	£50,000 and over	7.70%
£25,000-£49,999	7.20%	£25,000-£49,999	7.20%	£25,000-£49,999	7.20%
£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%	£10,000-£24,999	6.70%
£5,000-£9,999	6.20%	£5,000-£9,999	6.20%	£5,000-£9,999	6.20%
£2,000-£4,999	5.70%	£2,000-£4,999	5.70%	£2,000-£4,999	5.70%

If the account balance on Business Investor or Asset Reserve falls below £2,000, interest will be paid at 1.50% gross p.a. (1.19% net p.a.). Interest is calculated daily and paid quarterly on the first day of March, June, September and December for Business Investor and Portfolio Investor and for Asset Reserve on the last day of these months.

Nationwide
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White House contenders braced for frantic finale

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

THE American presidential election was yesterday building to a frenetic weekend climax with President Bush and Bill Clinton hurtling around the battleground states like balls in a pinball machine.

The latest CNN-USA Today tracking poll of likely voters showed Mr Bush trailing the Arkansas governor by just one point with four days left. Other polls suggested a ten-point gap, but the president evidently believes he can still pull off the greatest upset of modern American politics.

State by state the race is clearly tightening, and aides to Mr Clinton, who is so close to becoming only the third Democrat to be elected president in 28 years, have started to recall Michael Dukakis' wish in 1988 that he had an extra two weeks. The Clinton camp says it wishes that the campaign had ended two weeks early.

Mr Bush's act was finally

coming together as he whipped up huge rallies of the faithful with hyperbolic oratory. He accused his Democratic opponent of propounding "trample-down economics" in which an army of bureaucrats would march all over the dreams of ordinary people. Mr Bush said his dog Milla knew more about foreign policy than Mr Clinton and Al Gore, his running-mate.

The president, who has persistently denied this campaign as the ugliest in memory, now refers to Mr Gore as "Ozone" and criticises his passion for the environment. "This guy's crazy. He is way out, far out, far out, man," Mr Bush said.

Mr Clinton alternated between attacking Mr Bush for all the "incredible dishonest things" he had said on the campaign trail, and attempting to persuade voters that Mr Bush's claims of economic recovery were false.

The governor compared Mr Bush's assaults on his integrity to Richard Nixon's attacks on John Kennedy in 1960. He said the last quarter's better-than-expected economic growth figures were the result of huge arms sales that Mr Bush had approved purely to win votes in key states. Asked at a town hall meeting why he called his opponent "Mr Bush", not "President Bush", he said it was hard for him to treat respectfully a man whose campaign had riddled through US State Department files.

"Looking for dirt on my mother". Once again yesterday Mr Clinton was forced to deny on a telephone call-in show that he was unfaithful to his wife.

Mr Bush suffered an embarrassment when the FBI raided the home of Catalina Villalpando, the US Treasurer, on the suspicion that she had illegally accepted payments from her former employer after Mr Bush appointed her to his administration.

The CNN tracking polls have shown a virtual dead-heat since Wednesday when they began concentrating purely on respondents certain to vote, but their wider survey of all adults yesterday gave Mr Clinton an eight-point lead. That was in line with the ABC News tracking poll which put the Arkansas governor nine points ahead, and an NBC-Wall Street Journal poll which gave a ten-point gap. All three showed Ross Perot's support slumping to between 13 and 16 points.

Diary, page 12



Reaching out: Bill Clinton shaking hands with supporters after an election rally in Detroit on Thursday. Both parties have everything to play for, with Mr Clinton's lead over President Bush reduced to one point according to the latest opinion poll, three days before voting

President gazes at black hole in the Lone Star state

FROM JAMIE DETTMER IN DALLAS

GEORGE Bush has visited Texas six times since the middle of August, a frequency that testifies to the Republicans' precarious hold on a state the president calls home. Since 1945 only two presidential candidates — Adlai Stevenson and George McGovern — have failed to carry the state. Judging by an opinion poll published last Saturday, which shows Bill Clinton leading here by nearly 8 per cent, Mr Bush is facing a mighty struggle to avoid coming third.

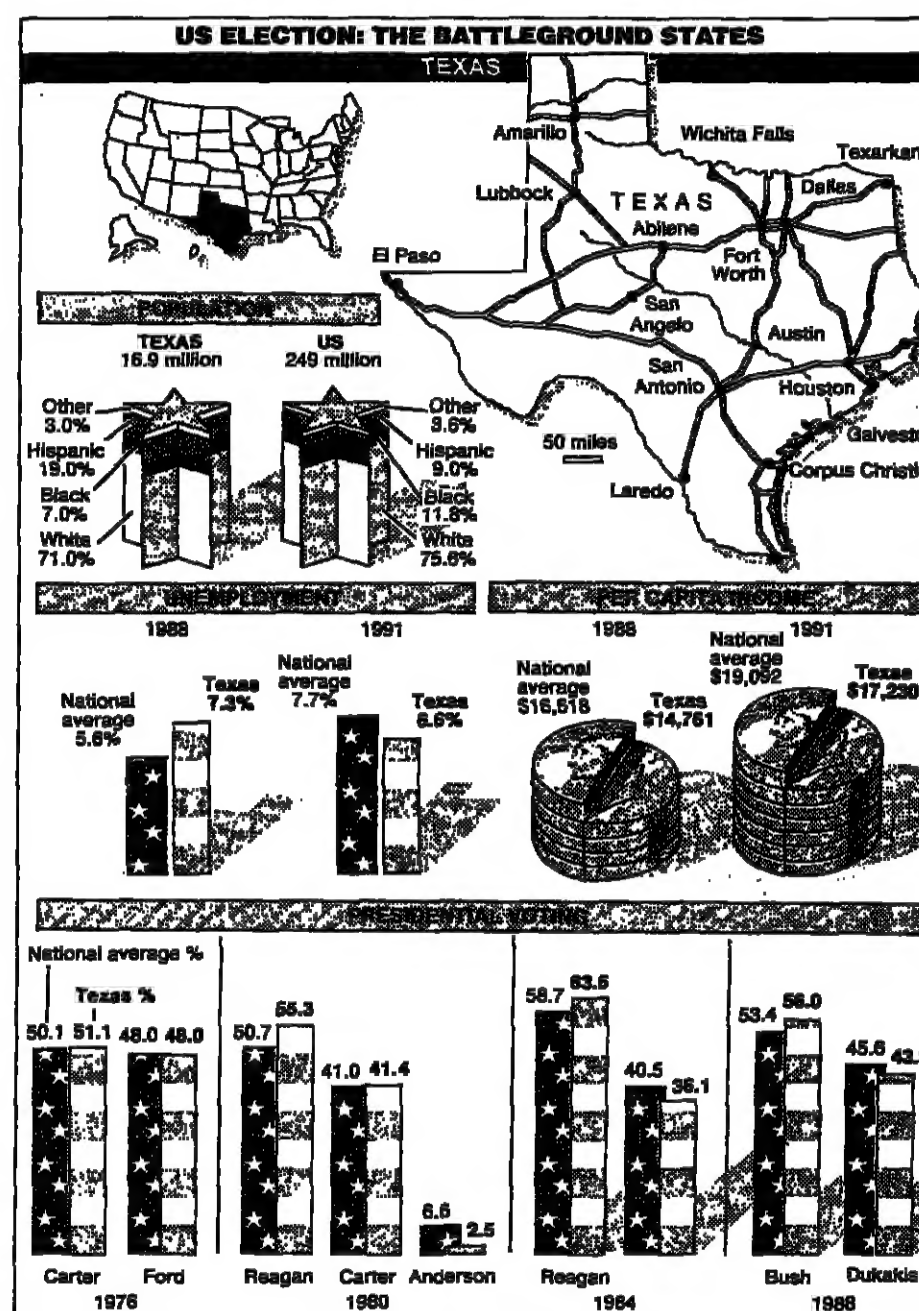
Mr Perot will almost certainly have more impact in Texas on Tuesday than in any other state. Nobody, save the most starry-eyed Perot loyalist, believes he can win the Lone Star state but he can act as a spoiler, although it is not clear who he will hurt most.

If he is to secure re-election, Mr Bush must win Texas, the third most populous state in the union. With California and New York firmly in the Democrat camp, it will be virtually impossible for the president to go back to the White House without the backing of Texas and Florida. For most of the past month Mr Clinton and the president

have been running neck and neck in Texas. Texas has not backed the Democrats in a White House contest since Jimmy Carter won it 16 years ago. Ronald Reagan was adored here but there is little enthusiasm for Mr Bush. Texans learnt the hard way that what goes boom goes bust. In the 1970s and early 1980s the state enjoyed breathtaking expansion. The oil flowed. Houston swagged. Dallas became the banking and insurance capital of the Sun Belt at its sunniest time and celebrated by transforming its skyline with glass towers. Rallying around the cry, "better nouveau than never", the new rich flaunted their wealth and the not so rich enjoyed a lifestyle that was the envy of middle America. With a slump in the "awl business", as Texans pronounce it, in 1986, the good times went.

Senior Texas Republicans admit the economy is undermining their electoral base and Mr Bush has, fairly or not, taken much of the blame. He has done his best to mollify voters in recent months. He cut a deal with Congress to keep federal financing for the development of an \$8 billion (£5 billion) atom smelter in South Dallas with the promise of more than 7,000 jobs. In the summer he authorised, to the dismay of China, the \$6 billion sale to Taiwan of F16 fighters, which are made at Fort Worth.

The Democrats, however, are making inroads in the Permian Basin in west Texas, the centre of the oil industry.



In Dallas and Fort Worth, Mr Perot is thought to be taking votes Mr Bush needs to offset the Democrats' strength among Hispanic voters in the south of the state. But Mr Clinton has not poured his

resources into the state, as he has never really believed he could win it. His real objective has been to do enough to compel Mr Bush to spend more time in Texas, thereby cutting down on the trips the

president could make to the battleground areas of the northeast and Midwest. Mr Clinton has tempted fate; no Democrat has won the presidency since 1845 without carrying Texas.

Growth cuts Democrats down to size

Economic expansion has taken some of the sting out of attacks on the Republicans, Anthony Howard writes

If Ross Perot's eccentric campaign has done nothing else, it has brought these issues very much into the electoral focus. Among the candidates he has hammered away on the theme of how the present generation is storing up troubles for their children and grandchildren. He has even made the figures familiar: the national debt places a burden of \$31,496 on every American worker, and each is paying out \$2,292 this year to meet the interest charges.

Mr Perot has a plan, if not to liquidate the national debt then at least to eliminate the ever-soaring federal deficit. Involving a 50 per cent rise in the price of petrol, swingeing welfare cuts, income tax increases and cuts in government spending, it is probably the type of manifesto that only a billionaire could afford to put forward. But at least the independent candidate for the presidency can claim to have met the problem head-on.

Both Mr Bush and Mr Clinton have tended to approach it by a more circuitous route. Basically, the Republicans are offering the remedy as before. Tax cuts are packaged as the best means to stimulate both savings and investment, thereby encouraging growth and

ultimately reducing the deficit. Mr Clinton, by contrast, yields the impression of being an unreconstructed Keynesian. The kind of partnership between business and govern-

ment practised in Japan and Germany is what America must seek to emulate, he says. Unlike the president, he is pledged to introduce tax increases. He aims to collect over the next four years \$97 billion by raising the top tax rate from 31 to 36 per cent and \$45 billion from the 72 per cent of foreign companies operating in the United States that at the moment pay no tax.

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New kid goes on slow jog around the block

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN WASHINGTON

Although Bill Clinton has taken to jogging with real fervour every day, he never seems to get any thinner. His crueler critics in the Republican party say that this is a sign of what would happen under a Clinton administration — lots of huffing and puffing without quite getting anywhere.

With the Republicans apparently closing the poll gap, the Arkansas governor is jogging more and more, the sweat pouring off him as he lumbers along, now through Michigan, now in Wisconsin, often accompanied by his wife, Hillary, in a matching sweatsuit.

George Bush, on the other hand, has cut down on his running because of his thyroid condition and is now charging around the country, banging on podiums and galvanising the Republican faithful into paroxysms of delight. As Mr Bush once said: "Can't stay in one place all the time. Gotta keep moving. Hippity-hop."

Ronald Reagan hardly ever took any exercise, and cruised his way through two terms. Another sign of the new, rejuvenated Mr Bush is his decision to appear on the MTV music network tomorrow night. When previously invited to participate in MTV's trendy *Choose or Lose* campaign programme, the president said he had no intention of becoming "a teeny-bopper at 68".

In the words of the programme host, 25-year-old Tabitha Sorren: "The youth vote could be the clincher... I think they realise now I'm not going to be dancing around in a buster while I talk to him." MTV's *Rock the Vote* and *Choose or Lose* campaigns have registered about a million young voters this year.

The Bush campaign rhetoric has taken on a hip new tone. On Tuesday, while saying that the "environmental extremism" of Al Gore, Mr Clinton's running-mate, would leave America "up to our neck in owls", he said that the Democratic vice-presidential candidate was "crazy, way out". He added: "Way out, man."

In an attempt to settle the troubling question of God's political affiliations, a diverse group of 42 American religious leaders has issued a statement saying that the deity is entirely impartial.

The statement, signed by Protestant, Jewish and Catholic leaders, was issued in response to the 140,000 pamphlets put out by the Operation Rescue anti-abortion group. They said that "to vote for Bill Clinton is to sin against God", a reference to the Arkansas governor's liberal stance on abortion. "Spiritual arrogance and political extremism," says the latest statement, "has no place in our public discourse."

Rabbi David Saperstein, director of the Religious Action Centre of Reform Judaism, said: "God is not a Republican or a Democrat." This leaves the sneaking suspicion that He may support Ross Perot.

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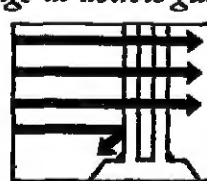
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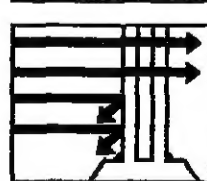
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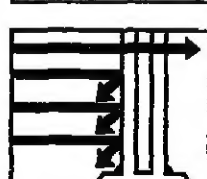
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Angola alert after guerrilla



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Pretoria denies sending troops as Savimbi men raid airport and shell city

Angola raises war alert after Unita guerrillas kill 15

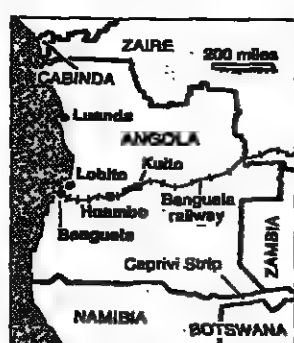
By MICHAEL HAMLYN in JOHANNESBURG and SAM KILEY, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT

FOUR Portuguese citizens and 11 Angolans were killed in Luanda, the Angolan capital, yesterday when rebel Unita guerrillas attacked the international airport in Luanda. The Angolan government promptly proclaimed that the central provinces were in a "state of war".

Soldiers from Unita (the Union for the Total Independence of Angola) also shelled the centre of Huambo in the central province and attacked the governor's residence as the country appeared to be sliding back into the 16-year civil war which ended last year with a toll of 300,000 people dead.

Angop, the state-controlled news agency, said a group of 40 Unita men attacked the area around Luanda airport overnight. Diplomats said the city of Huambo, 250 miles southeast of Luanda, had fallen to Unita. There were reports of fighting in the cities of Benguela, Lobito and Kuito. Angolan state radio said Unita had seized three municipalities in Hila province and five in the coastal province of Benguela.

"The situation is catastrophic," the state radio said in a report on Huambo. It said that Unita forces had seized a hospital, police station and radio transmitter in the city. A government source said that the police had retreated to a barracks in Huambo and were defending the governor's palace and a nearby television station from any Unita attack. Three policemen were killed in fierce fighting in Lobito, a port south of Luanda, on



Thursday night, the radio said. It quoted the governor of Huila province, Dumilde Rangel, as saying Unita was trying to take over the entire province but would not succeed.

Angolans have been on tenterhooks for the past month since the country's first democratic elections were won by the incumbent president, Jose Eduardo dos Santos, and the ruling Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA). Jonas Savimbi, the Unita leader, rejected the outcome of the elections and made allegations of fraud while threatening to restart the civil war which he fought with American and South African backing.

The United Nations pronounced that the elections had been "free and fair". The American and the South African governments have made it clear to Dr Savimbi that a return to the bush would get no backing from either Pretoria or Washington. Sources in the South African foreign ministry said recently that, far from supporting Dr Savimbi,

it would be more likely that the South African military would "shoot down any plane trying to supply him".

The Portuguese victims of Unita appear to have been caught in heavy mortar and shell fire as members of Unita's armed wing, the Fala, attacked the central suburb of Cassenda. A government spokesman said that the Unita forces had tried to take over a munitions depot near the airport but had been thwarted by government soldiers.

Cassenda is the headquarters of the Angolan air force which was last month incorporated into a combined national army of Unita and MPLA forces which fell apart when Unita generals deserted to join Dr Savimbi. The Unita radio station, Vorgan, claimed that the fighting in Huambo, which Dr Savimbi has made his base since he rejected the outcome of the elections, was started when members of the government's riot police opened fire on Unita supporters.

A senior diplomat in Luanda said: "I don't want to be the first to say that the civil war has restarted, but things are going from bad to worse and it is clear that the government will not now accept a power sharing deal with Savimbi."

As fighting flared, the South African government was accused by a black weekly newspaper in Johannesburg of sending troops to assist the Unita rebels, and of massing mercenaries on the border in Zaire. In Pretoria yesterday, R. F. "Pik" Botha, the South African foreign minister, denied the report.

New Nation, which is owned by a Roman Catholic church group, did not give any attribution to its assertions, but declared in its main front-page report that the South Africans sabotaged an electoral victory by the ruling MPLA, and threatened President dos Santos with a resumption of civil war if Unita was not accommodated in a national unity government.

The paper insisted that the South African Defence Force has sent the notorious Battalion 32 into southern Angola in anticipation of the resumption of hostilities. Ten South African helicopters had also



Fighting talk: R. F. "Pik" Botha, the South African foreign minister, denying in Pretoria yesterday that South African troops have gone into Angola to help Unita forces

been sent through the Caprivi strip in northern Namibia as back-up to the battalion.

Battalion 32 is made up of former Angolan fighters, who were recruited into the force to tackle the guerrillas of the South West Africa People's Organisation (SWAPO) during the fight for Namibian independence. They have since made themselves unpopular in South African black townships where they have been used in support of the police.

President de Klerk has undertaken to disband the regiment. Mr Botha rejected the New Nation report point by point: the helicopters, the massed mercenaries and Battalion 32. Former national servicemen

in the South Africa armed forces, however, recalled that when they were sitting in a camp in Angola during South Africa's last foray there, they heard denials from the government in Pretoria on the BBC World Service that the South African armed forces had any men in Angola.

In New York, members of the United Nations Security Council were alarmed at the prospect of renewed civil war in Angola. They were prepar-

ing a resolution threatening unspecified action against any party that violated the peace accords. In the resolution, clearly aimed at Unita, the council says that any party which fails to live up to its commitments "will be rejected by the international community". The council said that it was ready "to take all appropriate measures" on Angola.

Additional reporting from Reuters in Luanda.

De Klerk faces challenge from enemy within

Like other leaders who have tried to reform authoritarian structures, President de Klerk is fending off attacks from all sides — including his own party members

FROM MICHAEL HAMLYN in JOHANNESBURG

For the first time since his stunning referendum victory in March, there is strong criticism of President de Klerk from within the ranks of his own party.

The discontent has been simmering for a month, since the settlement with Nelson Mandela, the president of the African National Congress, which appears to have paved the way for the resumption of constitutional negotiations, but which has been seen by many in the National Party (NP) as having yielded too much to ANC pressure, and to have alienated Chief Mangosuthu Buthe, the Zulu Inkatha leader.

Matters have not been improved by Mr de Klerk's success in forcing onto the statute book a law on indemnity for past political crimes which had been vetoed by the Indian house in the tricameral parliament. Yesterday, the president's council, in theory a device for reconciling the wishes of the three houses in case of disagreement, but in practice packed with "all the president's men", recommended that the bill be signed into law.

According to David Brier, political correspondent of the Sunday Star in Johannesburg, "Nai MPs returning home after the disastrous short session of parliament privately expressed their unhappiness at the way the de Klerk government was floundering against the ANC". Mr Brier suggests: "De Klerk is increasingly being seen as a lame-duck president, losing the will to govern."

The party revolt first broke the surface when columnists in the Afrikaans newspapers *Die Burger* and *Beeld*, which may usually be relied on to act as National-

ist mouthpieces, spoke of the disillusion afflicting party supporters over the ANC deal and the falling out with Chief Buthe.

When Inkatha and the leaders of Ciskei and Bophuthatswana withdrew from talks with the government, the Nationalists saw their dream fade.

The Afrikaans Sunday newspaper *Beeld* then reported on the "somewhat despondent" mood of delegates at the Transvaal provincial congress of the National Party, over the government's apparent weakness when facing the ANC, and Mr de Klerk put on a show of strength at the following congress in the Orange Free State, where he called on the ANC to "stop their nonsense".

When it came to the congress in Cape Province, the disillusion and despondency boiled over.

Members declared that large groups of their constituents were also disillusioned and that businessmen were threatening to withhold funds from the party. One Nationalist MP complained recently: "The government is still being run by the Broederbond. They don't consult us at all."

According to Mr Louw, the rows in the party probably account for the lacklustre speech given by Mr de Klerk at the opening of the parliamentary session.

There was some comfort for Mr de Klerk yesterday. The *Citizen* newspaper, which has been his most loyal supporter, asserted that it does not think he is in danger of being ousted. "He is a reformer," the paper said. "And the NP is committed to reform... besides, there is nobody in the NP to take his place."



The rivals: Jose dos Santos, left, won the recent Angolan election but Jonas Savimbi alleged fraud

US 'asked Saudis to halt Iran sub deal'

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER in WASHINGTON

PENTAGON officials have refused to comment on reports here that the Bush administration was so alarmed earlier this year by the imminent sale of Russian attack submarines to Iran that it encouraged Saudi Arabia to pay Moscow not to go ahead.

The Saudis were not prepared to pay the necessary price, *The Washington Post* reported yesterday, and the first of the submarines is now on its way to Iran. The administration's fear is that Tehran will deploy the vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, through which 20 per cent of the world's oil is shipped.

Defence officials told the Post that they envisaged US warships once again escorting friendly ships in the Gulf if Iran were to deploy the vessels in the strait. "I can't imagine we'll permit them to do that," one said. "We conducted a substantial military operation

to prevent that five years ago and, if anything, our interests are now stronger."

The Pentagon said yesterday that Iran had bought at least two diesel-powered Kilo-class submarines from the Russians, who are desperate for hard currency. These submarines are extremely quiet and hard to detect.

Officials said that the first two had been undergoing sea trials and were now being used to train Iranian crews. One had passed through the Suez canal and was being towed south through the Red Sea. The second was still at a Russian naval base in Riga, Latvia.

In evidence to a congressional committee earlier this year, Rear Admiral Edward Sheaffer, director of naval intelligence, gave a warning that the submarines would have a "dramatic effect on Iran's neighbours".

'Soviet' aid package agreed

TOKYO: A two-day international conference on assistance to the 12 former Soviet republics closed in Tokyo with \$200 million (£127 million) in new pledges and agreement to establish a framework for long-term technical aid to help implement structural reforms (Joanna Pitman writes).

Ernest Stern, the managing director of the World Bank, announced at the final session that donor nations have agreed to put the bank in charge of organising future long-term technical aid, which will be implemented with each country separately.

Nine of the republics, excluding Russia, Ukraine and Turkmenistan, have already requested the help of the bank to co-ordinate consultative groups on their reform programmes and aid requirements. Mr Stern said.

Israel has high hopes of Jordan peace deal

FROM BEN LYNFIELD in JERUSALEM

ISRAELI officials returning from the Washington peace talks said yesterday they were on the verge of a breakthrough with Jordan that would push forward the slow-moving Arab-Israeli negotiations.

The optimism, voiced on the first anniversary of the Middle East peace conference in Madrid, contrasted sharply with remarks in Tunis by Yasser Arafat, the Palestine Liberation Organisation chairman, who said the peace process was at a dead end because of Israeli inflexibility.

Yossi Gal, the Israeli delegation spokesman, said: "We have made considerable progress during this round with Jordan and have almost reached agreements on a common agenda." It must still be endorsed by officials in Amman. Abul Salam Majali, Jordan's chief negotiator, and Elyakim Rubinstein, his Israeli counterpart, presented the draft to Edward Djerejian, the US assistant Secretary of State, on Wednesday. Israeli officials said this marked the first time Jordan had ever committed itself in writing to full peace with Israel.

The two neighbours have officially been at war for more than four decades, but have at times forged quiet co-operation. They share a deep suspicion of the PLO. The document talks about full normalisation between the two countries, an official said.

In Tunis, Mr Arafat yesterday called for an increased United Nations role at the expense of the Israeli-Palestinian talks, which have become bogged down over powers to be granted to a new Palestinian council. He urged that UN monitors be dispatched to the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

Leading article, page 13

Rebels attack

Phnom Penh: Khmer Rouge guerrillas attacked two villages, one the site of a fuel dump, on the outskirts of the Cambodian capital with rockets and mortar fire this week, a defence ministry spokesman said. Three people were wounded. (APR)

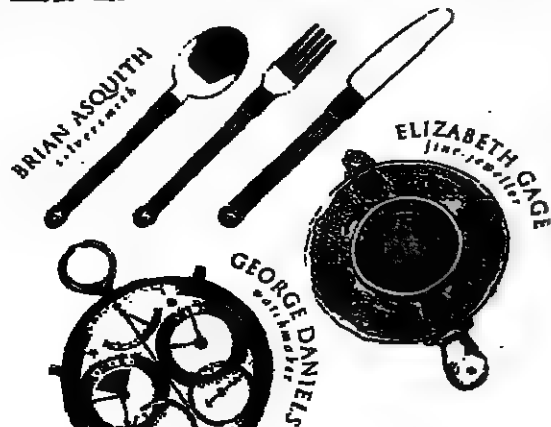
Hostile hotel

Mannus: A UN weapons inspection team were given a rough welcome in Bahrain where they arrived after two weeks in Iraq. Hotel staff refused to clean their rooms and death threats were put under their door. (Reuters)

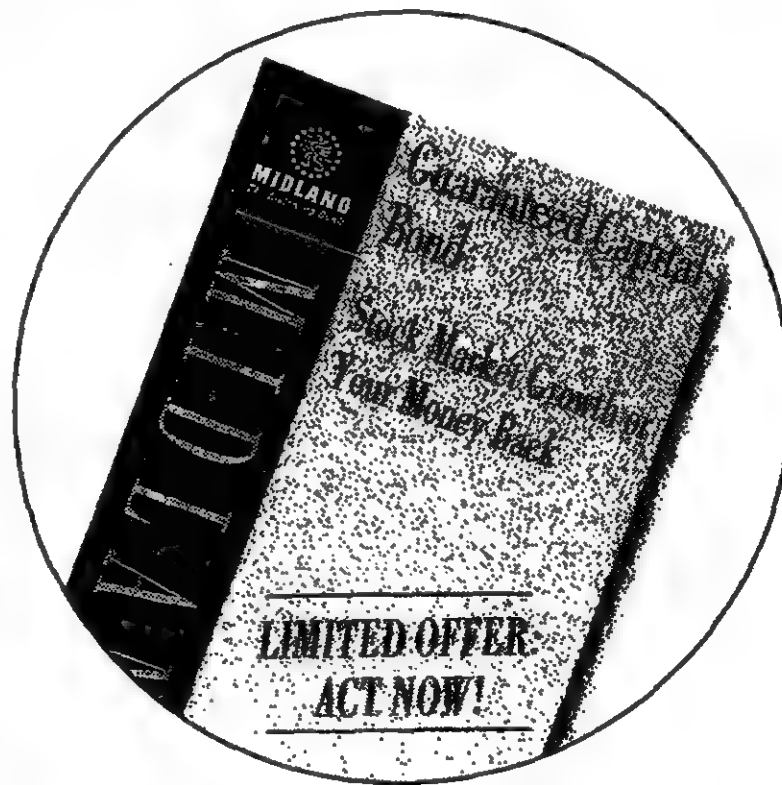
Net loss

Peking: A fishy tale about a 100-year-old female sturgeon, weighing 1,100lb and 17ft long, being caught in the Yangtze river by Chinese scientists was a junior reporter's hoax, the Xinhua state news agency admitted. (Reuters)

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If Europe is to be a place of unrestricted travel and exchange, it is just that kind of question on which we will have to reach some consensus. Italy, where a core of armed police maintain a vigil against drug importers will have to cohabit with Holland which has given over a park to its heroin mainliners. There is much lively argument to come.

● Faith Winter, who sculpted the statue of Bomber Harris in St. Clement Dane's Church, has contacted the Diary to express her sadness at yesterday's front page picture of the paint-splattered war hero. But exhibiting a spirit of which Bomber Command would surely be proud, the doughy artist says: "The memorial statue will be restored. There were flowers on the plinth when the attack was made



PATTEN'S PARADOXES

Britain's schools need both new freedoms and new rules

In the longest Education Bill in history, there was inevitably scope for self-contradiction. The Education Secretary, John Patten, wants to free schools from one set of rigid controls, but can do so only by imposing another set. When undermanned forces have secured a hold on local institutions, it is difficult to seize them back without appearing totalitarian. The government deserves congratulation for its attempt yesterday to dislodge the vested interests that control the state school system. Instead it will be accused of excessive centralisation and worse.

How does an elected government give back to ordinary people power which has been taken from them by unaccountable agencies such as local education authorities? It is superficially paradoxical to urge the "freeing" of schools from local mandarins only to subsume them under a single Whitehall bureaucracy. It may seem still odder to exorcise the dogmatic obsessions of local left-wing ideologues by imposing a fixed curriculum from which no school may deviate. Is Mr Patten not simply replacing a variety of small tyrannies with a larger, and more inescapable one?

Yes and no. If this Bill seems to have conflicting motives — centralising control of the curriculum where it preaches greater diversity, for example — it is because the political manoeuvring of the education establishment has left little alternative. The interlocking influences of the schools inspectors, the colleges of education, the teaching unions and the council education officers who dominate the staffing of state schools, present a skilful variety of different faces when threatened with change.

When, for example, attempts are made to raise primary school standards by regular testing, the curriculum advisory bodies insist that tests be consistent with the kind of anti-

didactic teaching practice that has been responsible for lowering standards in the first place. Teaching lobbies then complain that these tests are excessively time-consuming and wasteful of their energies.

It is not altogether surprising that in tacking this hydra-headed beast, even the well-intentioned reformer ties himself up in knots. True, there is something ominously Leninist about the idea that you can deliver power to the people only through the conduit of central government authority. But the particular mechanism which the Bill offers — freedom for schools both to opt out of local authority control and to specialise and vary their approach within a basic minimum syllabus — is broadly sound.

The most fundamental principle is that parents' wishes must be paramount. But one important clause seems to breach it, that covering the incurably bad schools to which "flying" squads will be sent. These squads will be allowed to replace staff, and possibly even to steer the school towards opting out without a parental ballot. This is a drastic strategy. But what else is to be done with "sink" schools in which parents can do so little and care so little?

If this Bill is fatally undermined by its seeming inconsistencies, it will be a pity. Mr Patten seems sincerely committed to the idea of improving education for the majority of children. Further, he seems to interpret this to mean what most parents understand by it: restoring the importance of knowledge and visible achievement. Such a politically hazardous reorganisation ought not to be necessary simply to reinstate the doctrine that children are liberated, rather than oppressed, by instruction and that their self-esteem is enhanced, rather than undermined, by structured goals. That it has become necessary is not the fault of this government.

HIGH HOPES FROM JORDAN

The news from the Middle East is getting better

The announcement that Israel and Jordan have reached tentative agreement on a framework for peace brings the seventh round of Arab-Israeli talks to an unexpectedly positive conclusion. This may not be the hardest part of the Middle East peace process but it does at least show cause for continuing optimism.

The timing is important, as all parties to the talks know. With only three days to go before the election, the Bush administration has an achievement in one of the few foreign policy areas where American emotions are deeply engaged, and where James Baker's ability as a secretary of state was most convincingly shown.

For Yitzhak Rabin's government, the result comes none too soon. After four months in power, he had little to show for his electoral claim that he offered a way out of the negotiating cul-de-sac. He has used up much political capital in explicit acceptance of the land-for-peace formula and in taking on the settlement movement. The recent killing of five Israeli soldiers by Hezbollah fundamentalists and the fatal rocket attack on Kiryat Shmona — insensitively condoned by the chief Syrian negotiator — have so incensed most Israelis that the right-wing opposition is now calling for an immediate pull-out from the talks. King Hussein has also been able to ride the wave of domestic sympathy after his return from a cancer operation in America. He now feels strong enough to move forward without waiting for agreement by other Arab negotiators.

Jordan has had a de facto peace with Israel for many years. The king regularly meets Israeli leaders, Jordan has informal agreements on water, the environment,

tourism and border questions; and the daily traffic in people and goods across the Allenby bridge is evidence of the myriad links between the Jordan, the West Bank and Israel. None the less it is important that progress be made to proper diplomatic links.

In other areas of the talks, progress has been stubbornly slow. Israel had high hopes of the initial Syrian flexibility. There was even talk of an Assad-Rabin summit. Israel has conceded the need to return some of Golan, and was even contemplating acknowledgement of Syrian sovereignty over all the occupied heights. The Syrians have held out for full withdrawal, and do not want a peace that is not linked to a settlement of the Palestinian issue. Now Israeli public opinion may insist on no further movement until Syria, still the dominant force in Lebanon, curbs Hezbollah.

Meanwhile the moderate Palestinian negotiators, wary of the Hamas fundamentalist hold in the West Bank and Gaza, have also toughened their stance. Despite Israel's readiness to accept Palestinian negotiators from outside and its blind eye to PLO links, progress in defining Palestinian autonomy may be slow.

The significance of these latest talks — and those in Paris on regional issues — is that they depend less now on pressure from Washington. Whoever wins on Tuesday, peace is no longer such a hostage to electoral politics. Radical Arab states may test the resolve of a new Democratic president; but the parties convening again on November 9 are likely to pick up where they have just left off. Whether he wins or not, that will be one of George Bush's most solid contributions to world peace.

OLD STAR WARS

Galileo still teaches blinkered man to keep his mind open

The mills of the Church of Rome grind slow, but they grind exceeding small. Pope John Paul II is going to rehabilitate Galileo today, three and a half centuries after the Inquisition condemned him as a heretic for his view that the Earth goes round the sun. This pontifical U-turn is more important for the reputation of the Roman Catholic Church than for Galileo's, which was sanctified by history long ago. But better late than never for popes to see the light.

By all accounts, including those older and more careful than Brecht's, Galileo was an impossible intellectual: arrogant, grumpy and obsessive. His adoption of the Copernican cosmology, verified by the Venetian telescopes he helped to perfect, seemed to threaten the literal interpretation of the Bible, which saw the Earth at the centre of all things, and the stars in the firmament of heaven as lamps placed up there for the benefit of man.

Galileo was dangerous because he wrote in vernacular Italian that the man in the Roman piazza could understand. He threatened the tenure of the Aristotelian vested interests in the universities. He was a milestone round the neck of the church in its war with the Reformation. But he was right.

He was also lucky. Other notorious victims of false accusations, such as the sensitive but misunderstood Emperor Tiberius and Richard III had detractors. Tacitus and Shakespeare, who wielded sharper and wittier pens than Cardinal Bellarmine and the hacks of the Inquisition. With better backers, even three and a half centuries might not have been enough.

In his recantation before the Inquisition Galileo "abjured, cursed and detested" his heretical new view of the universe. Afterwards he allegedly muttered "Eppur si muove, it still moves", a remark that is in character even though the ben trovato quotation was not recorded until more than a century after his death.

Today, in the age to which Galileo was a midwife, scientists rather than popes are thought of as infallible. This pope, from the same bloody-minded but admirable nation as Copernicus, has made the improvement of relations between his Church and science one of the goals of his pontificate. Stephen Hawking, a Galileo of today, is among the celebrity scientists who have attended seminars arranged by the pope.

Professor Hawking is one of those seeking the ultimate equation of everything. "If we can find the answer to that — it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason — for then we should know the mind of God", he has said. That is a claim to omniscience as arrogant as that of the Inquisition.

The moral of Galileo, his condemnation and belated rehabilitation, is that man may be the measure of all things, but that ultimate certainty is never going to be available on this small, errant planet. Metaphysical answers, religious answers, even scientific answers, are provisional, until proved wrong. It is a turn-up for the good book that this humanist message is belatedly recognised, even by popes. It takes time. Human knowledge and nature are still worthy of much improvement. But the world does move.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 071-782 5000

Tory loyalties and the honour of the prime minister

From Ms Barbara Reid

Sir, As a long-standing, loyal and extremely active Conservative, it is obvious to me from the letter from Sir Peter Emery and 31 other Conservative MPs (October 29) that, now that the ill-judged and juvenile threats of a general election have disappeared, the refuge of loyalty is being resorted to.

No one doubts the achievement of John Major in winning us the fourth term; I do not believe any other leader would have achieved this. Neither do we doubt his acclaim at party conference. However, what Sir Peter and others seem to forget is that some things are more important than blind party loyalty.

One of these is the continuance of our country as a parliamentary democracy, the cessation of which I believe is the heart of Maastricht because of the powers that would be transferred to Brussels. I would hope that in preserving this we would not lose a prime minister; but if we do, then I have no doubt that the Conservative party is big enough and resilient enough to cope quite adequately.

Anti-Maastricht Conservative MPs are currently under enormous pressure, but I hope that they adhere to their beliefs and are not swayed by the cheap arguments of the like put forward by Sir Peter.

Yours faithfully,

BARBARA REID,
8 Laimlock Place,
Hounslow, Middlesex,
October 29.

From Mr Peter Wright

Sir, A group of 32 Conservative backbenchers reprimand those MPs of their party who have, in their eyes, undermined government policy and the standing of the prime minister. They say that this criticism must not go unanswered "because it does not represent 90 per cent of Conservative members in Parliament, whose views in a democratic party should ensure full support for the prime minister".

This exhortation to party block votes, irrespective of the individual representatives' opinions, lends a new meaning to democracy in this country, though we have of course met it many times in totalitarian regimes.

Whatever the rights and wrongs of the matter to be decided, I have a considerable personal regard for an elected politician who on vital issues puts what he sees as the best interests of the country before those of his party; I may not agree with him, but I recognise his integrity.

Yours sincerely,

P. D. WRIGHT,
Windong, Palestine,
Andover, Hampshire,
October 29.

From Mrs Christina Speight

Sir, Lord Boardman (letter, October 29) and the 32 Conservative MPs

would carry more weight if one could trace anywhere in either of their letters any reference to the national interest rather than to mere party advantage.

Lord Boardman might consider that we, the public, who elected members of Parliament, have a right to know what is happening. The secrecy he enjoins is profoundly undemocratic.

All discussion now appears to be centred on tactics and not on issues. The backbenchers' letter fails to recognise that all opinion polls — we're not allowed any other kind — point to a massive public rejection of the Maastricht treaty. Therefore, the only MPs to represent this majority in Parliament are the "Euro-sceptics", and they are putting their primary loyalty to their country above their narrower loyalty to their party.

Yours faithfully,

CHRISTINA SPEIGHT,
20 Kamillies Road, W4,
October 29.

From Miss Sarah Lee

Sir, Sir William Harding's words of commendation for the prime minister (letter, October 27) are timely and apposite but he is misguided in calling for him to "show us his dark qualities". For it is Mr Major's integrity and astuteness that will serve him so well throughout this maelstrom and beyond.

He has shown courage in admitting mistakes, strength of character in coolly and quickly adapting policy to the dramatically altered situation following Britain's exit from the ERM, and discernment in balancing the tightrope between the one hand the consequences of being left out of the European union, and on the other, the risks of Britain losing control of its own destiny therein.

John Major survived detractors and opinion polls at the election; he will survive the short-sighted vilification by the press and other media. He deserves steadfast and loyal, though not unquestioning, support. Integrity, vision, humanity and resolution are lasting and valuable qualities; they will prove true and efficacious and long outlive the temporary hysteria that seeks relief in the public punishment of a scapegoat.

Yours faithfully,

SARAH LEE,
97 Queen's Gate, SW7,
October 28.

From Dr Ralph Horwitz

Sir, In his diatribe of October 28, "Why the prime minister should go", Paul Johnson lists Mr Major's (and Norman Lamont's) unqualified assurances that they would maintain sterling's value in the ERM as not merely foolhardy but, as it turned out, dishonourable.

Come off it, Mr Johnson. Do you really believe or know any prime minister or any finance minister any place, any time, anywhere, who has or

could ever give anything but such unqualified assurances in a fixed foreign exchange system?

Yours faithfully,
RALPH HORWITZ,
Westhall, Combe, Oxfordshire,
October 28.

From Mr Peter M. Burnham

Sir, I agree wholly with Paul Johnson when he cites Mr Major's failure to expect "honourable resignation" as Mr Major's fifth deadly sin.

The role of the sacrificial lamb is not one which, traditionally, our culture and style of government encourages. However, when individuals hold high leadership offices and either they, or their organisations, patently fail, then honour demands their resignation, particularly when the cost to others of their failure is high.

I cannot believe that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Governor of the Bank of England are not men of honour — which can only mean that Mr Major's judgment is seriously at fault.

Yours faithfully,

PETER BURNHAM,
Tilthams House, Meadrow,
Godalming, Surrey,
October 28.

From Sir John Horsburgh-Porter

Sir, Like many members of the Conservative party I am dismayed by the alternating vacillations and fits of subornness exhibited by the prime minister over the last month or so. But Paul Johnson rather spoils his case by hoping for and expecting the return of Margaret Thatcher.

As an eminent historian he must surely be aware of the results that followed when the worthy burghers of Moscow invited back Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible) from the Alexandrovskoye monastery in 1565, after he had retreated there in self-imposed exile: two cities were laid waste and the ancestor of the KGB was born.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN HORSBURGH-PORTER,
Bowers Croft,
Maggie Lane, Colshill,
Amersham, Buckinghamshire,
October 28.

From Mr Ray Ackary

Sir, For God's sake let Mr Major resign, and become Lord Pontifex of Brixton. He is the worst prime minister in 50 years. I would vote Labour for the first time to get him out.

On a scale of ten he would just make my top ten since May 1940: Churchill, Home, Thatcher, Atlee, Macmillan, Callaghan, Wilson, Heath, Eden.

Yours faithfully,

R. F. ACKARY,
72 Boyd Court, Downshire Way,
Bracknell, Berkshire,
October 27.

Wartime records

From Mr Arnold Rosen

Sir, Your obituary (October 24) of Harry Williamson (Wulf Schmidt), the wartime double agent, prompts me to ask why her Majesty's government will not make related material readily available after a suitable period of time.

I act for John Moe, who was a double agent flown to this country by the Abwehr in April 1941. He is now 73 years of age and has been informed that copies of the messages which he sent to the Abwehr between 1941 and 1944 were destroyed some time prior to 1960.

I have been informed that he may not have access to his personal file. The reason given is that the security of operations depends upon all such records being protected. The government maintains that the highest standard of security is necessary, however old the records, to maintain confidence in the Security Service as an employer.

This ignores the understandable wish of men 50 years after the event to learn whether or not their heroism was worthwhile.

Yours etc.,

ARNOLD ROSEN,
Arnold Rosen & Co. (solicitors),
199 Piccadilly, W1.

No 'Europhobic'

From Lord Blake, FBA

Sir, The headline to an item in your Diary of October 27 could give the impression that I am a "Europhobic". This is not so.

I am in general a supporter of Maastricht, but I have always believed that, on grounds of both national and party unity, the government should promise to submit the terms ultimately negotiated to a referendum, as was done in 1975 when Britain first entered the EC.

That belief has nothing whatever to do with Europhobia.

Yours faithfully,

BLAKE,
House of Lords,
October 27.

Letters to the editor that are intended for publication should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — 071-782 5046.

Plea to UN for rescue of Sarajevo

From Mrs Saba Risaluddin and others

Sir, The city of Sarajevo and its inhabitants cannot outlive the winter if its siege and bombardment continue — a bombardment which has actually grown more intense of recent days. There is only one thing that can save it from being exterminated as a city, as happened to Vukovar a year ago — a limited military intervention, or at least the credible threat of such an action, by the UN, the US and the EC.

Food convoys, even if they get through, can avail not at all to affect this one absolutely crucial immediate issue: is Sarajevo to survive after a heroic siege of six months, or are its civilian defenders to be abandoned by the world to their fate?

For months Karadzic's planes, borrowed from Serbia, bombed Bosnian towns. As soon as the UN imposed an air exclusion zone, and the US and EC seriously threatened to enforce it, the bombing was temporarily halted.

The last thing Karadzic wants, despite all his boasts, is an actual confrontation with the West. Exactly the same would happen with the shelling of Sarajevo, a city which has until recently never been bombed

from the air because Karadzic found he could destroy it more effectively with the Yugoslav army's heavy artillery thoughtfully placed to ring the city before the war began.

If the UN does not save Sarajevo, it will not only have the blood of most of its surviving inhabitants on its hands, it will also have lost any workable surviving rump of Bosnia for refugees to return to. The problems of the future will in consequence be immeasurably exacerbated.

We appeal to both the British and US governments to introduce at once at the UN Security Council an enforceable resolution specifically forbidding the shelling and bombing of Sarajevo.

Yours,

SABA RISALUDDIN,
ZAKI BADAWI,
MICHAEL FOOT,
HUGO GRAY,
ADRIAN HASTINGS,
TREVOR HUDDLESTON,
HYLTON,
RUSSELL JOHNSTON,
The UK Citizens Committee
for Bosnia-Herzegovina,
c/o 181 Eaton Square,
Belgrave, SW1,
October 28.

Petra Kelly's life

From Mr Richard Dunn

Sir, Ten thousand swords, I have no doubt, leaped from their scabbards as your readers, especially those who knew Petra Kelly, threaded their way, bewildered, through Bernard Levin's article about her (October 26).

I worked with Petra in 1974 on the secretariat staff of the Economic and Social Committee of the European Communities (if Petra ever worked for the Commission, as your obituarist claims, it must have been only very briefly). Incapable of cynicism (some would say realism), of an entirely selfless integrity, she was, because of her passionate commitment to so many important social causes, spectacularly unsuitable for civil service work, and her rightful role was unquestionably that of a policy activist.

There is no doubt in my mind that Petra was murdered, as she would never have taken leave of this world of her own accord without writing a quite lengthy explanatory memoran-

Cold eye on Comet Swift-Tuttle

From Dr Brian G. Marsden

Sir, As the astronomer responsible for the initial suggestion that Comet Swift-Tuttle might conceivably hit the Earth on its next return, I was dismayed by the tone of your report and leading article (October 26).

The report said that "the chance of collision is calculated at one in 400". When pressed, I have mentioned a figure of more like one in 10,000 and the date of the possible encounter as August 14, 2126, rather than 2116.

Our great-grandchildren will no doubt welcome the reprieve. However, we simply do not know whether there is any danger. That is why I indicated that a worldwide effort should be made on this comet.

Discovered in 1862, Comet Swift-Tuttle takes about 130 years to travel around the Sun. Until it was picked up at the end of last September most astronomers thought that its period was 120 years and that it passed by unobserved some ten years ago. This ten-year delay shows that the orbit does not conform to the law of gravitation.

The motions of most comets are to some extent affected in addition by reactive forces to their expulsion of meteoric material, but Swift-Tuttle has carried this trait to an extreme — one very good reason for the prevalence of the associated Perseid meteor shower each August. It is precisely because of these forces that the computation is uncertain.

At this point we need not confirming calculations, but further observations. Starting around the middle of 1993, Comet Swift-Tuttle needs to be carefully observed with the large telescopes of the southern hemisphere and also with the Hubble space telescope, if and when it gets repaired. The observations should continue for at least five years, as the comet recedes far beyond the orbit of Saturn and fades dramatically.

At these larger distances Swift-Tuttle will pretty much return to its frozen state and negligible amounts of meteoric material will be expelled. The reactive forces should therefore disappear, and the orbit can be computed from the observations on the basis of gravitational theory alone.

By the turn of the century we should be able definitively to state whether there is any chance whatsoever that our descendants will be threatened by Swift-Tuttle on its next passage through the inner part of the solar system. This reasoned approach will probably completely dispose of the problem.

If, even as a result of these new observations and computations, the threat remains, we shall at least have alerted our descendants to it. If the threat disappears, there are surely other comets and asteroids to take its place.

With the appropriate construction and co-ordinated use of an array of new telescopes set up around the world it should be possible, over the course of a few decades, to discover and identify almost all the asteroids and a large proportion of the comets that might collide with the Earth during the next several centuries.

In the unlikely event of our calculating a sure hit, the offending object will in all probability make several revolutions around the Sun before the fatal day. This will allow opportunities both for intensive study of the object and, eventually, our attacking it before it can attack us.

Yours etc.,

BRIAN G. MARSDEN,
Harvard-Smithsonian Center
for Astrophysics,
Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA,
October 27.

Harder to remember

From Mr Ian McMillin

Sir, The letter from Rear Admiral I. G. W. Robertson (October 22), president of the Craft (Can't Remember a Flipping Thing) Club, recalled to my mind (and this is a surprise to me) the correspondence initiated in your columns by Admiral Sir James Eberle (September 13, 1991) concerning his suffering from LMS (loss of memory syndrome).

Respondents to his remarks included Brigadier M. P. Ford, Sir Henry McDowell, Mr Peter Tozer, and other worthy sufferers. Mr Alan Green referred to a report that the late Sir Ray Brown, co-founder of Racal Electronics, had said that when entering a room full of familiar faces, the only name he could bring to mind was Alzheimer.

This all increases my own anxiety, when so many leading professionals in our armed services ("now where is that confounded button?"), industry, politics and the social structure generally seem to be stricken.

Yours faithfully,

IAN McMILLIN,
23 East Common,
Harpenden, Hertfordshire.

From Mrs Gweneth Cannon

Sir, Whilst many people may think that the ribbon streamers flying from the aerial of my car radio denote a preference for a particular football team, that is not their purpose. When I come out of my local shopping centre into the massive car park, I look for the ribbons and know that my car is parked underneath them.

Yours faithfully,
GWENETH CANNON,
5 Carlton Close, NW3.

Weekend Money letters, page 24

... ..

BUSINESS 17-26

Profile: Company doctor who is curing Ferranti

SPORT 27-32

Is Lennox Lewis the best in the world?

RACING 28

Lester Piggott leads British hopes in Florida

WEEKEND SPORTING FIXTURES PAGE 27

THE TIMES

2

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 1992

WEEKEND MONEY

NON-STOP



Robert Maxwell-style pension abuses cannot be stopped by legislation, Margaret Granger, Opas president, says Page 21

SLOW START

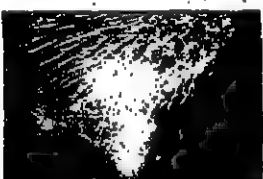
A unit trust investing in permanent interest bearing shares almost failed to get off the ground Page 23

FAIR FEES



Private medical insurance is costly because treatment is expensive, not because insurers overcharge Letters, page 24

EXPLOSION



Claims on personal accident policies for children soar around bonfire night, a prime time for injuries Page 22

THE POUND

US dollar 1.5632 (-0.0083)
German mark 2.4112 (-0.0058)
Exchange index 78.4 (-0.2)
Bank of England official close (4pm)

STOCK MARKET

FT 30 share 1963.8 (+15.1)
FT-SE 100 2658.3 (+16.0)
New York Dow Jones 3226.55 (-19.72)*
Tokyo Nikkei Ave 16767.40 (-170.31)

INTEREST RATES

London: Bank Base: 6%
3-month interbank: 7 1/2%
3-month eligible bills: 6 1/2%
US: Prime Rate: 6%
Federal Funds: 2 1/2%
3-month Treasury Bills: 2.98-2.99%
30-year bonds: 8 1/2-8 3/4%

CURRENCIES

London: New York: £ \$1.5632
DM \$1.5420
Sfr \$1.3769
FFr \$6.5536
Yen \$162.47
Index: 78.4
ECU: £0.815887
ECU: £226.658
London Forex market close

GOLD

London: 333.80 PM \$339.25
New York: 333.45 \$339.95
217.25-217.75
Jew York: 339.85-340.35*

NORTH SEA OIL

West (Nov) \$19.25/bbl (\$19.50)

RETAIL PRICES

Pl: 138.4 September (1987=100)
Denotes midday trading price

Property disposals planned to cut debts

Control Securities incurs £196m loss after writedowns

By Neil Bennett
BANKING CORRESPONDENT

CONTROL Securities, the Belhaven brewing and property group, has suffered a loss of £196 million in the year to end-March after making savage writedowns on its property portfolio.

The group is being kept afloat by a banking standstill agreement and plans to meet lenders on November 18 to reveal a reconstruction proposal.

The standstill expires at the end of November and unless Control manages to extend it or put together a reorganisation plan it will be unable to pay the heavy interest bills due on its £182 million borrowings in December. The group's bondholders have agreed to delay interest payments until January.

The company is also being sued by the liquidators of the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International for

■ Belhaven brewer Control Securities, beset by problems, shocked the City with huge losses

£5.8 million, and by Nazim Virani, the former chairman, and his two brothers, who were ousted from the board last April.

Control is planning to sell gradually its investment property portfolio, now valued at £138 million, to pay off debts. The disposals would leave the group with its chain of 660 public houses and the Belhaven Brewery, a chain of hotels in Spain and some residual property interests.

The £196 million loss was caused by property writedowns and interest charges and compares with a £3.3 million loss in the previous year. Control has reduced the

value of its investment properties by £152 million to £210 million, and suffered a £70 million fall in the value of other properties, including the public houses. The group is also setting aside £5.5 million to cover banking fees. The loss has cut the group's net assets by 87 per cent to £37 million.

The writedowns wiped out the group's £25.9 million operating profit, which was depressed due to the lack of any contribution from property trading. Despite the problems, Belhaven increased profits and the Spanish hotel operation performed well despite the recession.

Sydney Robin, Control's new chairman, said: "The company's accounts include writedowns which are disastrous by any standards... heavy squalls in the summer threatened many times to overwhelm the company."

Control has hired Hill Samuel, the merchant bank, to work on a reconstruction and is planning to hire property specialists to help with the disposal of the portfolio.

Loans from the group's 14 banks, led by Barclays, are secured on Control's property portfolio. The company is servicing its loans fully at present but has told the banks that it will not have the cash to meet interest payments in December.

A year ago, Control's head offices were raided by the Serious Fraud Office as part of its investigation into BCCI, and the company's shares were suspended. Mr Robin said: "The search not only caused the company to lose credibility with many of its creditors and other parties, but caused significant disruption to the attention that could be paid to the company's affairs."

In March, Mr Virani was charged with conspiracy to present false accounts. Soon afterwards, he and his brothers were dismissed from Control. Control has now appointed John Kerslake, a former corporate development director at Jefferson Smurfit, as finance director, and plans to hire a new chief executive once the group's financial position is more secure.

Touche Ross, BCCI's liquidator, is suing Control for £5.8 million. The accountancy firm claims that the group owes it the money from a loan made to Batace, a company that jointly owned a chain of Spanish hotels with Control and is now in receivership. Touche claims that Control guaranteed the loan, which the company contests.

Mr Kerslake also said there was outstanding litigation between the company and the Virani family, but refused to give details.

Virani remains on the defensive

By OUR BANKING CORRESPONDENT

WHILE Control Securities struggles for survival, Nazim Virani, its former chairman, faces his own battle. Last March, he was charged with conspiring with Mohammed Haque, an executive from the collapsed Bank of Credit and Commerce International, to present false accounts to the value of \$4 million after a Serious Fraud Office investigation. He has been remanded on bail of £1.25 million until December 1.

Mr Virani is preparing his defence in the former head office of Control Securities in Victoria, central London, which he has kept despite being ousted from the company's board in April last year.

Less than two years ago, Mr Virani was one of the most successful entrepreneurs in the property sector, and the richest Asian businessman in Britain, with a wealth estimated to be more than £80 million.

The Virani family arrived in Britain in 1972 as refugees from Uganda. They bought a small supermarket in Dulwich, south London, and developed it into a small chain. Mr Virani diversified into hotels when his father had a heart attack and needed an easier job. In 1985, Mr Virani bought a stake in Control Securities, an ailing property company, and expanded by issuing shares for acquisitions. He did business with many of the leading property entrepre-



Virani: mosque contacts

neurs of the eighties, including John Ribbit, Tony Clegg and Gerald Ronsod.

An Ismaili Muslim, Mr Virani also claimed that he met his best business contacts in the mosque. Control's former offices bear witness to the company's former power and present difficulties. The marble clad lobby is now deserted and ankle-deep in dead leaves.

Upstairs, Mr Virani works in his spacious office, helped by a few loyal assistants. On one shelf are photographs of him with Margaret Thatcher, Prince Charles and the Aga Khan, and a cricketing trophy from a match between Control and BCCI in 1990.

Mr Virani has lost most of his wealth. His stake in Control was once worth more than £60 million. The shares have been suspended at 16.5p since October last year, and are thought to be nearly worthless.



Paint it red: Hugh Lang, chairman, left, and Jamie Borwick said production was down to 1,800 vehicles

Coopers agrees to pay \$95m

FROM PHILIP ROBINSON IN NEW YORK

COOPERS & Lybrand, auditor of MiniScribe, a now defunct US computer company, has agreed to pay a further \$95 million to settle legal action against it.

The payment, approved by a Federal bankruptcy judge, is among the largest made by an accounting firm in a professional liability case and brings the total paid out so far by Coopers to \$145 million. The firm neither admitted nor denied any wrongdoing.

Action was brought by creditors and investors who claimed losses as a result of a 1986 audit in which Coopers certified MiniScribe profits of \$22.7 million. The true figure was subsequently shown to be \$12.2 million.

In 1989, outside directors and new auditors of MiniScribe, a Colorado-based disk maker, charged that company managers had "perpetrated a massive fraud".

The outside directors reported that senior company officials had broken into trunks containing auditor's paperwork and altered figures to inflate stock values by \$1 million. Bricks had been packaged to look like \$4.3 million of hard disks and sent to distributors, to be counted as stock in transit.

MiniScribe filed for bankruptcy in January 1990 and began liquidation 16 months later.

It was alleged that Coopers had overlooked MiniScribe's bogus sales and questionable purchase orders and permitted the company to make inadequate reserves for returned goods and bad debts.

Elsevier merger terms renegotiated by Reed

By MARTIN WALLER, DEPUTY CITY EDITOR

THE sharp fall in sterling's value since Black Wednesday meant Reed International and the Dutch Elsevier group had to renegotiate merger terms to create one of the world's five biggest publishing groups because of the relative fall in value of the British business.

Instead of an 11.5 per cent holding in Elsevier, meant to reflect Reed's larger size, the British partner will take just 5.8 per cent once their operating activities are merged. The effect will be that Reed will own the equivalent of 53 per cent of the merged business against almost 56 per cent.

Reed announced the revised terms with its interim figures to end-September. Pre-tax

profits are ahead 9.6 per cent to £93.5 million and the dividend rises from 5.25p to 5.5p. Reed expects full-year pre-tax profits of at least £239 million. Consumer publishing was the best performer, a 60 per cent rise in operating profits to £33.7 million partly reflecting IPC Magazines' gaining leadership in the television listings market.

Both sides in the merger will have an equal number of board seats, with neither having voting control. Nigel Stapleton, Reed finance director, said the aims and management philosophies of the two companies were similar.

Taxi maker skids deeper into loss

By PHILIP FANGALOS

MANGANESE Bronze Holdings, which makes London taxis, slid deeper into the red as exceptional closure costs and the tough times faced by London's cabbies took their toll.

There was a pre-tax loss of £2.45 million in the year to July 31, against a loss of £949,000 last time. Closure of a foundry in Darlington led to an exceptional charge of £1.73 million. Turnover climbed to £71.2 million (£69.7 million).

Jamie Borwick, managing director, said only 1,800 vehicles had been produced, against 2,300 the previous year. The final dividend is maintained at 1p. Manganese shares fell 5p to 66p.

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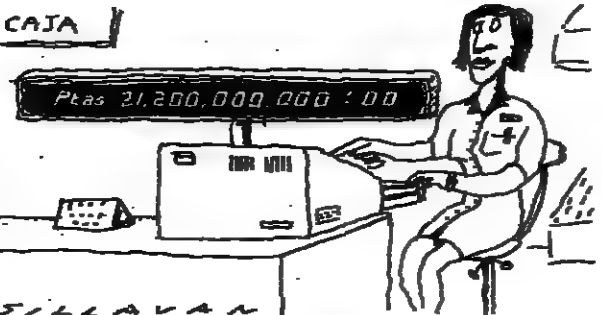
Spain repatriates Galerias Preciados

By JONATHAN PRYNN

THE Spanish jewel in the crown of the collapsed Mountheigh Group has returned to local ownership, five years after being taken over by the British property company.

Galerias Preciados, Spain's second biggest department store chain, with 29 outlets, was acquired by Mountheigh, then headed by Tony Clegg, for £153 million in October 1987. It was sold yesterday for Ptas21.2 billion (£124 million) to a group of Spanish businessmen by Tim Hayward and Stephen James, of KPMG Peat Marwick, the joint receivers of Mountheigh.

The purchasers are Justo Lopez-Tello, a former director of the group, Fernando Sada, a businessman, and Santiago de Molinedo, a financial investor. They will own 84 per cent of Galerias with the rest being held by other managers.



Silvan

Sar Sada said: "We are not buying a company in its prime but we have concluded that Galerias is viable and has a future."

Mountheigh's grandiose plans for transforming the performance of the stores failed and the company returned to loss this year with a deficit of Ptas3.3 billion for the 12 months to end-April. The company is believed to have been heavily loss making during the current financial year.

The sale represents the fifth change of ownership in ten years for the 8,000 employees of Galerias. Mr Hayward said: "The stores are so much part of everyday Spanish life that it seems particularly fitting that they are now in Spanish hands."

KPMG spoke to dozens of companies in the effort to find a purchaser. However, Mr Hayward said this had not included Nelson Peltz and Peter May, the two American

entrepreneurs who controlled the group between 1989 and 1990 and were reported to be interested in buying Galerias. Marks and Spencer made an approach to the receivers for individual stores but were told the chain could not be broken up and would be sold as a going concern.

The £120 million proceeds from the sale brings the total raised by the receivers to more than £150 million, compared with bank debt of more than £400 million at the time of Mountheigh's demise in May. Mr Hayward reiterated that shareholders were extremely unlikely to receive any distribution on completion of the winding up.

The biggest remaining assets for disposal are the Merry Hill shopping centre near Dudley, West Midlands, a shopping centre at Camberley, Surrey, and a half share in the Criterion centre in London.

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ERM exit raises cost of Reed's marriage

THERE cannot be many businessmen mourning Britain's exit from the exchange-rate mechanism, but Peter Davis at Reed International can claim to be a founding member of that exclusive club. Reed was putting the final touches to its most important move to date, the merger with Elsevier of The Netherlands, just as the pound retreated from the ERM.

The revised terms, adjusted to reflect the guilder's 13.6 per cent rise against sterling since September 16, have meant a cost of £150 million for Reed, the difference in value between the 11.5 per cent stake in Elsevier envisaged and the 5.8 per cent it will now receive. The adjustment in the equalisation rate between the two shares is aimed to reflect currency movements since the deal was originally struck and should not affect earnings for Reed.

Reed shares were, nonetheless, marked up by 6p to 581p on relief that the deal will proceed, and on terms that put the British, seen as the more energetic partner, in the driving seat even though they will not have direct control should it come to a vote. This must remain the one caveat should the two parties subsequently fall out, the result would be deadlock.

The merger creates a group with the financial stability and clout to expand heavily in the world publishing market. Reed's half-way figures beat market estimates largely because cost-cutting has moved ahead at a faster pace than expected, with perhaps £10 million taken out over the past year. The shares sell on about 16 times' 1993 earnings and are fairly valued for now, although they remain a core holding.



Spreading the word: Peter Davis, for whom the pound's ERM exit was detrimental to Reed's merger with Elsevier

Lucas

PROFESSOR Tweedie's accounting revolution promises investors a much better chance to spot creative and flatter treatment. But long before Financial Reporting Standard 3 becomes mandatory there are already other ways to look at some companies, especially those who are obliged to state their accounts according to American rules. These are generally

more conservative. For example, distributable profits of Lucas in 1991 were \$83 million (£52.8 million) according to British convention but a mere \$32.8 million under the US generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Last year's adjustment was even more grisly. A \$16.9 million distributable loss became a negative \$68.1 million under GAAP.

The American requirement to amortise goodwill and more stringent rules on the

reporting for discontinued operations accounted for most of the difference. But many would say the bigger loss paints a more realistic picture of Lucas's problems. Indeed, these might seem close to insuperable but for £90 million of handouts from the group's over-funded pension scheme. If the City is close to the mark, Lucas could see a cash outflow of as much as £60 million this year before asset sales. The difficulties of the automotive industry are

not new and it surprises that Lucas has so much rationalising to do so late in the day. The shares are propped by bid rumours. If they fail to materialise or hopes of unlocking shareholder value fade, Lucas shares may have far to fall.

Rank

IT IS a measure of the market's anxiety about Rank Organisation that the shares rose 16p to 590p on a state-

ment saying that trading conditions are virtually unchanged. Although they slipped to 586p later in the day, the sign of relief from analysts was almost audible.

Concerns about the slow pace of disposals and high debt levels had pushed the shares down to 460p in September, a five-year low. Yesterday's trading update detailed a mixed bag of performances from the trading subsidiaries but, crucially, contained no unexpected bad news.

If anything, the outlook is slightly brighter than the market expected. Trading at video distribution, last year's black hole, has improved, thanks to remedial management action and "tentative signs" of a pick-up in economic conditions, but losses at the company continue.

The debt position remains under control and net borrowings are slightly below last year's level of £960 million after the disposal of the motorway service stations in December. The shares currently yield an attractive 7 per cent on 1992 earnings forecasts of about 43p. Cover remains tight at only 1.3 times but about 80 per cent of the cash-flow needed for the expected 31p payout is provided by the dividend from the 49 per cent holding in Rank Xerox.

Pre-tax profit forecasts for the year ending today have been trimmed slightly to about £244 million. Predictions for next year are bunched around the £280 million mark, putting the shares on a forward multiple of just under 12 times. Some doubts remain but the yield and yesterday's clearing of the air should underpin the shares.

BA deal to buy Dan-Air escapes EC scrutiny

THE European Commission said it will not investigate British Airways' takeover of Dan-Air, despite vigorous protests to Brussels from Air UK, Virgin and British Midland, the rival British carriers. A spokesman for Sir Leon Brittan, the competition commissioner, said yesterday that Dan-Air's turnover was below the threshold at which merger inquiries are usually triggered.

Under European Community rules, both partners involved in a merger must have sales of more than 250 million ECUs (£203.6 million) in Europe. Not even Dan-Air's global turnover exceeds the threshold. The spokesman said that another set of criteria sometimes used by the Commission — which state that if two thirds of the business involved in the merger would be concentrated in one member state then any enquiry is left to the relevant national authority — did not come into the Commission's assessment. The spokesman confirmed that four British airlines had lodged another complaint under a separate article of the Treaty of Rome. He refused to comment on how far this line of attack might be taken, nor which article was used. BA bought the company from Davies and Newman Holdings last week for £1.

Tapie deal collapses

BERNARD Tapie, the French businessman, has been dealt a fresh blow, with the collapse of another proposed asset disposal. Bernard Tapie Finance SA, M Tapie's debt-laden holding company, said the management of Terrillon, its weighing machine subsidiary, had given notice that it could not fulfil a promise to buyout 67.25 per cent at the agreed price of between £100 million and £110 million. BT's plans to sell Adidas, the German sportswear firm, were confounded two weeks ago when Perutlan Group, of Britain, pulled out of a £215 million deal.

Building society ahead

THE North of England Building Society has reported profits up 7.4 per cent to £5.2 million for the first six months of the year. The society increased its loan loss provisions from £302,000 to £400,000, which is proportionately lower than most societies. Gross mortgage lending rose 25 per cent over the same period last year, to £172 million. Retail receipts were down to £13.5 million from £24 million in the first half of 1991 because of competition from National Savings. Assets had grown 10.8 per cent to £1.4 billion since the beginning of the year.

Booker buys in Spain

BOOKER, the food distributor and agribusiness, has bought a Spanish cash and carry business for £2.2 million. The acquisition includes one outlet about six miles from Barcelona. Last year, sales were £42.4 million and pre-tax profit £765,000. Barry Skipper, chief executive, of Booker's food distribution division, said the deal followed a successful venture in Portugal and was a springboard for further expansion in Spain. Booker has bought 91.25 per cent of the cash and carry's share capital from Cemas.

Clothes firm improves

FRENCH Connection, the clothes maker and retailer that produces Nicole Farhi fashionwear, has accompanied further evidence of corporate recovery with an upbeat forecast for the rest of the year, although shareholders will have to wait longer for a return to the dividend list. Pre-tax losses narrowed from £4.99 million to £535,000 in the six months to end-July, and the group made an operating profit of £903,000 against a loss of £1.43 million last year. French Connection shares moved ahead 2p to 18p on the USM.

Dawson to shed jobs

DAWSON International, the Edinburgh textile and clothing group, whose brands include Ballantyne and Pringle, is to lay off about 205 people as part of a production reorganisation. The jobs will go when its factory in Dumfries is closed next month. Another factory, in Arbroath, Tayside, is to shut, but its 40-strong workforce will be switched to another factory in the same town. Dawson employs more than 5,000 people at 24 factories in Scotland. It said the shake-up was not a direct result of the recession.

Prime time for Bowford

PRIME People, the human resources group, is boosting its training services operations with the acquisition of Bowford Engineering Services for about £2.8 million in shares, cash and loan notes. The £1 million cash element of the deal is partly funded through a rights issue of 12.5 million new shares on a one-for-three basis, at 44p a share, to raise £530,000. Prime reports a pre-tax loss of £161,000 in the six months to end-June (£121,000 loss). There is a loss of 0.01p (1.5p loss) a share and the interim dividend is again passed.

Chemical spur to Gatt

By PATRICIA TEHAN

THE UK chemical industry is "deeply concerned" about current economic trends and worried that talks to lower international trade barriers will collapse. The UK's Chemical Industry Association was joined by Cefic, the European chemical industry council, in urging negotiators on the

General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) to finalise talks.

Ray MacSharry, EC farm commissioner, and Ed Maddy, US agriculture secretary, are to meet on Sunday. If they succeed in unblocking the talks, the agreement will liberalise world trade in a broad range of sectors, including chemicals. John Cox, director general of the Chemical Industries Association, said a resolution "is number one priority" for the industry.

Jacques Puechal, Cefic president, wrote to Willy De Clercq, chairman of the external relations committee of the European Parliament, yesterday saying: "In the interest of worldwide trade development and having a special regard to the present economic recession, the European chemical industry is of the strong conviction that there is an urgent imperative to finalise the present GATT negotiations as soon as possible."

Mr Cox also urged the government to do more to stimulate economic growth.

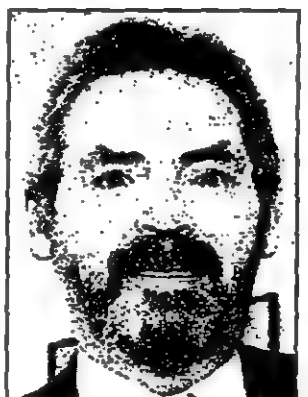
Pensions complaints rise after Maxwell scandal

By SARA MCCONNELL

LOSS of confidence in company pensions in the wake of the Maxwell scandal helped to push the number of cases dealt with by the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (OPAS) up to 20,034 in the year to March 31. The previous year's figure was 7,240.

Don Hall, OPAS's chief executive, said: "Clearly, the Maxwell affair has cast a heavy shadow over the UK pension scene." Complaints relating to the winding-up or merging of schemes, and to the use of surplus funds, increased most sharply. OPAS attributed this partly to the recession and the high level of company insolvencies. Its report identifies delays and lack of information from scheme trustees and companies during winding-up as the biggest problem.

There were cases in which employees' contributions were not invested or employers failed to make contributions



Hall: "heavy shadow"

on employees' behalf. Examples of bad or non-existent record keeping and failure to comply with disclosure regulations were also uncovered.

The service is dealing with about ten cases in which employees are unlikely to get any benefits because employers invested contributions in their own companies. Mr Hall said such companies could be in breach of trust.

Pension transfers were again the largest single source of complaints — 24 per cent of the total. In one case, a scheme member was offered a lower transfer value in April 1991 than the amount transferred on her behalf by an insurance company three years before. After several months' delay, the transfer value was revised to £47,100 from £30,800. In

another case, underfunding meant an employee could only get enough from the scheme to buy the guaranteed minimum pension. The employer agreed to increase the contribution rate, which meant the member could buy the minimum plus 50 per cent.

□ The European Court of Justice has set January 26, 1993, as the date for hearing four test cases on equalising pension ages in company schemes. One of these is the Coloroll case. Submissions will be made on behalf of the Irish, Dutch and German governments, as well as the British.

The court's decisions are expected to clarify questions left unanswered by the Barber judgment of May 17, 1990, which decided that pensions were pay and that men and women should have equal pension treatment.

The Coloroll pension trustees expect the hearing to decide whether companies must pay equal benefits only for service after May 17, 1990, or whether those payable after that date but earned before it must also be equal.

About two months after the hearing, the Advocate General will publish a report. This will probably form the basis of the judgment, which is expected to be handed down in June.

Schemes plundered, page 21

CBI calls for action in South East

By OUR BUSINESS STAFF

THE Confederation of British Industry has urged the government to take urgent action to raise spending on vital transport projects to prevent the South East becoming the UK's Achilles' heel.

A report from the CBI's South East office says there are still serious weaknesses in the region's transport network. It says action is required to bring the South East transport network up to "a level that will enable business to compete in a Europe where the centre of gravity is moving eastwards".

The office has been monitoring infrastructure problems locally for three years. "Failure to invest now in essential infrastructure projects will, far from making the region the 'Gateway to Europe', turn it into the UK's Achilles' heel," it says.

Norman Lamont, the Chancellor, is coming under pressure from industrialists to announce more spending on infrastructure in his Autumn Statement. The CBI said priority should be given to announcing the preferred route for the Channel Tunnel high-speed rail link; starting the north-south cross-London Thameslink 2000 rail route; introducing new Networker trains for Kent lines; a South Coast trunk road; additional airport runway space; and improving links to airports.

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BRITISH FUNDS

The Bank of England is continuing to take advantage of the gilt market's buoyancy to help fund the government's spending programme.

It issued a further £300 million of existing index-linked issues consisting of £150 million of Treasury Index-Linked 2½ per cent 2009 and £150 million of Treasury

Index-Linked 2½ per cent 2024.

In the conventional market, longer-dated issues expressed disappointment at the Chancellor's failure to tackle funding in his Mansion House speech. But earlier falls were soon recouped as hopes were revived of an imminent base rate cut. On the futures mar-

ket, the Long Gilt was down about 1½ before rallying. It drifted off again in late trading to finish nine ticks down at £101 as 34,000 contracts were completed.

Conventional Treasury 84 per cent 2017 ended 13 ticks down at £99½. Short Exchequer 9½ per cent 1998 was 12 ticks off at £107½.

1992				1993			
High	Low	Start	Price	±	High	Low	Start
SHORTS (under 5 years)							
99%	97%	Treasury 9% 1993	100%	0.01	100%	99%	Treasury 9% 2002
100%	97%	Treasury 10% 1993	100%	0.01	101%	99%	Treasury 10% 2003
100%	97%	Treasury 11% 1993	100%	0.01	102%	99%	Treasury 11% 2004
100%	97%	Treasury 12% 1993	100%	0.01	103%	99%	Treasury 12% 2005
100%	97%	Treasury 13% 1993	100%	0.01	104%	99%	Treasury 13% 2006
100%	97%	Treasury 14% 1993	100%	0.01	105%	99%	Treasury 14% 2007
100%	97%	Treasury 15% 1993	100%	0.01	106%	99%	Treasury 15% 2008
100%	97%	Treasury 16% 1993	100%	0.01	107%	99%	Treasury 16% 2009
100%	97%	Treasury 17% 1993	100%	0.01	108%	99%	Treasury 17% 2010
100%	97%	Treasury 18% 1993	100%	0.01	109%	99%	Treasury 18% 2011
100%	97%	Treasury 19% 1993	100%	0.01	110%	99%	Treasury 19% 2012
100%	97%	Treasury 20% 1993	100%	0.01	111%	99%	Treasury 20% 2013
100%	97%	Treasury 21% 1993	100%	0.01	112%	99%	Treasury 21% 2014
100%	97%	Treasury 22% 1993	100%	0.01	113%	99%	Treasury 22% 2015
100%	97%	Treasury 23% 1993	100%	0.01	114%	99%	Treasury 23% 2016
100%	97%	Treasury 24% 1993	100%	0.01	115%	99%	Treasury 24% 2017
100%	97%	Treasury 25% 1993	100%	0.01	116%	99%	Treasury 25% 2018
100%	97%	Treasury 26% 1993	100%	0.01	117%	99%	Treasury 26% 2019
100%	97%	Treasury 27% 1993	100%	0.01	118%	99%	Treasury 27% 2020
100%	97%	Treasury 28% 1993	100%	0.01	119%	99%	Treasury 28% 2021
100%	97%	Treasury 29% 1993	100%	0.01	120%	99%	Treasury 29% 2022
100%	97%	Treasury 30% 1993	100%	0.01	121%	99%	Treasury 30% 2023
100%	97%	Treasury 31% 1993	100%	0.01	122%	99%	Treasury 31% 2024
100%	97%	Treasury 32% 1993	100%	0.01	123%	99%	Treasury 32% 2025
100%	97%	Treasury 33% 1993	100%	0.01	124%	99%	Treasury 33% 2026
100%	97%	Treasury 34% 1993	100%	0.01	125%	99%	Treasury 34% 2027
100%	97%	Treasury 35% 1993	100%	0.01	126%	99%	Treasury 35% 2028
100%	97%	Treasury 36% 1993	100%	0.01	127%	99%	Treasury 36% 2029
100%	97%	Treasury 37% 1993	100%	0.01	128%	99%	Treasury 37% 2030
100%	97%	Treasury 38% 1993	100%	0.01	129%	99%	Treasury 38% 2031
100%	97%	Treasury 39% 1993	100%	0.01	130%	99%	Treasury 39% 2032
100%	97%	Treasury 40% 1993	100%	0.01	131%	99%	Treasury 40% 2033
100%	97%	Treasury 41% 1993	100%	0.01	132%	99%	Treasury 41% 2034
100%	97%	Treasury 42% 1993	100%	0.01	133%	99%	Treasury 42% 2035
100%	97%	Treasury 43% 1993	100%	0.01	134%	99%	Treasury 43% 2036
100%	97%	Treasury 44% 1993	100%	0.01	135%	99%	Treasury 44% 2037
100%	97%	Treasury 45% 1993	100%	0.01	136%	99%	Treasury 45% 2038
100%	97%	Treasury 46% 1993	100%	0.01	137%	99%	Treasury 46% 2039
100%	97%	Treasury 47% 1993	100%	0.01	138%	99%	Treasury 47% 2040
100%	97%	Treasury 48% 1993	100%	0.01	139%	99%	Treasury 48% 2041
100%	97%	Treasury 49% 1993	100%	0.01	140%	99%	Treasury 49% 2042
100%	97%	Treasury 50% 1993	100%	0.01	141%	99%	Treasury 50% 2043
100%	97%	Treasury 51% 1993	100%	0.01	142%	99%	Treasury 51% 2044
100%	97%	Treasury 52% 1993	100%	0.01	143%	99%	Treasury 52% 2045
100%	97%	Treasury 53% 1993	100%	0.01	144%	99%	Treasury 53% 2046
100%	97%	Treasury 54% 1993	100%	0.01	145%	99%	Treasury 54% 2047
100%	97%	Treasury 55% 1993	100%	0.01	146%	99%	Treasury 55% 2048
100%	97%	Treasury 56% 1993	100%	0.01	147%	99%	Treasury 56% 2049
100%	97%	Treasury 57% 1993	100%	0.01	148%	99%	Treasury 57% 2050
100%	97%	Treasury 58% 1993	100%	0.01	149%	99%	Treasury 58% 2051
100%	97%	Treasury 59% 1993	100%	0.01	150%	99%	Treasury 59% 2052
100%	97%	Treasury 60% 1993	100%	0.01	151%	99%	Treasury 60% 2053
100%	97%	Treasury 61% 1993	100%	0.01	152%	99%	Treasury 61% 2054
100%	97%	Treasury 62% 1993	100%	0.01	153%	99%	Treasury 62% 2055
100%	97%	Treasury 63% 1993	100%	0.01	154%	99%	Treasury 63% 2056
100%	97%	Treasury 64% 1993	100%	0.01	155%	99%	Treasury 64% 2057
100%	97%	Treasury 65% 1993	100%	0.01	156%	99%	Treasury 65% 2058
100%	97%	Treasury 66% 1993	100%	0.01	157%	99%	Treasury 66% 2059
100%	97%	Treasury 67% 1993	100%	0.01	158%	99%	Treasury 67% 2060
100%	97%	Treasury 68% 1993	100%	0.01	159%	99%	Treasury 68% 2061
100%	97%	Treasury 69% 1993	100%	0.01	160%	99%	Treasury 69% 2062
100%	97%	Treasury 70% 1993	100%	0.01	161%	99%	Treasury 70% 2063
100%	97%	Treasury 71% 1993	100%	0.01	162%	99%	Treasury 71% 2064
100%	97%	Treasury 72% 1993	100%	0.01	163%	99%	Treasury 72% 2065
100%	97%	Treasury 73% 1993	100%	0.01	164%	99%	Treasury 73% 2066
100%	97%	Treasury 74% 1993	100%	0.01	165%	99%	Treasury 74% 2067
100%	97%	Treasury 75% 1993	100%	0.01	166%	99%	Treasury 75% 2068
100%	97%	Treasury 76% 1993	100%	0.01	167%	99%	Treasury 76% 2069
100%	97%	Treasury 77% 1993	100%	0.01	168%	99%	Treasury 77% 2070
100%	97%	Treasury 78% 1993	100%	0.01	169%	99%	Treasury 78% 2071
100%	97%	Treasury 79% 1993	100%	0.01	170%	99%	Treasury 79% 2072
100%	97%	Treasury 80% 1993	100%	0.01	171%	99%	Treasury 80% 2073
100%	97%	Treasury 81% 1993	100%	0.01	172%	99%	Treasury 81% 2074
100%	97%	Treasury 82% 1993	100%	0.01	173%	99%	Treasury 82% 2075
100%	97%	Treasury 83% 1993	100%	0.01	174%	99%	Treasury 83% 2076
100%	97%	Treasury 84% 1993	100%	0.01	175%	99%	Treasury 84% 2077
100%	97%	Treasury 85% 1993	100%	0.01	176%	99%	Treasury 85% 2078
100%	97%	Treasury 86% 1993	100%	0.01	177%	99%	Treasury 86% 2079
100%	97%	Treasury 87% 1993	100%	0.01	178%	99%	Treasury 87% 2080
100%	97%	Treasury 88% 1993	100%	0.01	179%	99%	Treasury 88% 2081
100%	97%	Treasury 89% 1993	100%	0.01	180%	99%	Treasury 89% 2082
100%	97%	Treasury 90% 1993	100%	0.01	181%	99%	Treasury 90% 2083
100%	97%	Treasury 91% 1993	100%	0.01	182%	99%	Treasury 91% 2084
100%	97%	Treasury 92% 1993	100%	0.01	183%	99%	Treasury 92% 2085
100%	97%	Treasury 93% 1993	100%	0.01	184%	99%	Treasury 93% 2086
100%	97%	Treasury 94% 1993	100%	0.01	185%	99%	Treasury 94% 2087
100%	97%	Treasury 95% 1993	100%	0.01	186%	99%	Treasury 95% 2088
100%	97%	Treasury 96% 1993	100%	0.01	187%	99%	Treasury 96% 2089
100%	97%	Treasury 97% 1993	100%	0.01	188%	99%	Treasury 97% 2090
100%	97%	Treasury 98% 1993	100%	0.01	189%	99%	Treasury 98% 2091
100%	97%	Treasury 99% 1993	100%	0.01	190%	99%	Treasury 99% 2092
100%	97%	Treasury 100% 1993	100%	0.01	191%	99%	Treasury 100% 2093

BUSINESS PROFILE: Eugene Anderson

Doctor puts Ferranti on a slimming cure

The affable Texan hired to turn round Britain's ailing missile-maker has aged in the process, reports Angela Mackay

Eugene Anderson took on much more than a formidable task when he became chairman and chief executive of Ferranti International almost three years ago. He knew that the defence systems group had been devastated by fraud and might not survive, despite intensive care. What he could not have known was that the Cold War would end and lead to drastic cuts in defence budgets, while a dull economic climate would turn into prolonged recession.

Anderson has largely completed the financial resuscitation of the group by selling many businesses, sharply reducing the workforce and refocusing the company. But Ferranti's long-term future is still in doubt. Anderson, 54 and a Texan, is lean and fit, but he used to look younger than his years. The rigours of his current job have changed that. So, with hindsight, would he still have accepted the position?

'I'm inherently optimistic, or maybe a little mad or naive, to do the kind of thing I do'

"What's the point of dwelling on that? Let me put it this way. Given the same set of facts that were available then, I would still have chosen to do it today. To preserve something out of a business which would have otherwise gone to the wall, has been a real achievement."

A banker who worked closely with Anderson on Ferranti described him as a problem solver with a fertile mind. "Depending on what side you are on, you could say he was either dogged or stubborn when confronted with a dilemma."

Anderson would agree. "I certainly have the ability to persevere," he says in a soft, southern drawl. "I think I'm inherently optimistic, or maybe I'm a little bit mad or naive to do the kind of thing I do. I hope my colleagues would believe I am a good man in a crisis and attack problems in a clear-headed way."

With Ferranti, it has been all about finding out what unites this company. I found it had a capability of producing advanced systems which could be used not only in defence but in business and the community and that this should be the unifying factor. The problem

was how to accomplish this. We had seven or eight divisions which did not talk to one another, in fact they competed against one another. I said let's kick down the palace walls and work together."

Ferranti's problems stemmed from an elaborate \$1 billion defence contract fraud masterminded by James Guerin, the company's former deputy chairman, who operated the deception through International Signal & Control (ISC), an American company founded by him and bought by Ferranti for \$420 million in 1987. In September 1989, the City was shocked by the scale of the fraud, which ripped a £215 million hole in Ferranti's assets and forced a £185 million write-off. The company was forced to sell almost £500 million of assets to repay its banks, led by National Westminster, and initiated several law suits to try and regain the lost cash. After an investigation by the

US Justice Department and the Serious Fraud Office, Guerin was given a 15-year prison sentence in June. He had pleaded guilty to eight counts of fraud and arms smuggling. Ferranti insiders said the company's culture of exaggeration and secrecy was the main reason why the fraud went undetected for so long. Ferranti had pressed Guerin and ISC for information about several purported defence contracts but was told the information could not be disclosed for security reasons.

Public criticism of Anderson has been negligible and even off the record colleagues and associates find little to say. One colleague said he was a bit too bureaucratic and too fond of paperwork. One of his bankers said he was very sympathetic, which, while a strength in a situation as sensitive as Ferranti's, meant he was perhaps too forgiving of some senior managers he inherited when he took over from Sir Derek Allen-Jones.

In June, Ferranti reported a pre-tax loss of £99.6 million (£98 million loss) for the year to March 31. Analysts reckon the company might break even in the current



Pruning for healthy growth: Anderson says Ferranti could be back to break-even this year after the company's reorganisation

year and finally get a chance to use some of its substantial tax losses. Anderson, however, will not relax. "I have reduced an incredible loss at Ferranti to an unsatisfactory loss. A lot of people told me they would not have given 2p for Ferranti's survival, but three years later we have pulled our debt down by well over half a billion pounds and we have a pretty good core business. It was a very painful process."

The workforce has been cut from 23,000 to 4,500, and only about 11,000 of the workforce went with businesses when they were sold. The largest single disposal was the sale of the radar division to GEC for £130 million. "I am focusing on two things," Anderson says, "how that I have dealt with the life-threatening problems. The first is getting more business and the second involves strengthening the

capital structure of the company, which we may do in several ways including more joint ventures."

Ferranti has, for example, sold 50 per cent of its sonar division to Thomson-CSF, the French electronics and defence group.

A graduate of Harvard Business School, Anderson has had several "company doctor" jobs, starting in 1966 when he was transferred to Britain from America as managing director of Globe Petroleum Sales, a Southampton-based subsidiary of Tenneco, the oil group. "I was only 27 and my boss asked me to go to England to be MD of this little company in trouble. I said I would like the job but I didn't have a passport. I had never been outside America."

"I came here before my family and arrived at an hotel in the West End at about 4 am expecting to get

some sleep. I was too excited, so I packed my bag at about 6 am, hailed a cab and said 'Show me London.'"

Anderson was with Tenneco for 20 years in America and Britain, where he was deputy managing director of Albright & Wilson, Tenneco's chemical subsidiary. By the time he left the oil group to become president of Celanese, the American fibres group, he had become vice president in charge of corporate development.

In 1985, before joining Ferranti, he had been ousted back to Britain to nurse Johnson Matthey, the metals group, back to health. "When I arrived at Johnson Matthey, they were just announcing a £150 million loss and had debts of about £500 million. Fortunately, Johnson Matthey was literally a little gold mine. It had under-

utilised assets and a sound business. The only part of the company that was in real trouble was the banking subsidiary, which was set up ad hoc. One co-director said they thought they'd found a niche in the market but what they had really found was a chasm."

"I bought a bunch of shares in Johnson Matthey and that was a very good investment, accompanied by a lucrative options scheme. At their low, the shares were about 65p and by the time I left they were above £4."

The picture at Ferranti is not as rosy. In keeping with custom, Anderson invested in himself and bought shares in the company when he arrived — about £80,000 — but the shrinking business and general gloom about the company has seen the value of the shares plunge from 40p to 6½p, despite

an improving balance sheet. He also has options on 9.35 million Ferranti shares at an average strike price of 36.8p a share, exercisable early next year. He is, therefore, a long way out of the money and will need to draw on his reserves of optimism to sustain his enthusiasm, despite an annual salary of £464,000.

Anderson was raised on a cattle ranch on the Texas pan handle, the oldest of five children who helped their parents work the land. "My parents were college-educated but the depression changed their lives drastically and it coloured a lot of my childhood. Security became very important and we were careful about money for luxuries. I didn't see the sea until I was ten and I remember that moment very clearly."

He describes the Texan landscape as having "a raw beauty", but says he has no affinity with it. He prefers Cheshire, where he lives with his Czechoslovakian wife Daniela and 13-year-old daughter. When he took control of Ferranti, he moved head office from London to one of company's main sites, at Cheadle, Cheshire.

He is a keen gardener and a lover of opera. An avid sailor, he had a 43 ft yacht custom built in Taiwan and shipped to a mooring in the south of France, where he has an apartment near Cannes. A dapper dresser, Anderson has had the same Savile Row tailor for almost 25 years. He appears at home in his adopted country.

"I have no desire whatsoever to go back and live on the land, (the only house I own in America is in Connecticut). I closed that chapter when I went to the University of Texas to study engineering. Most of my life has been made up of distinct chapters that do not overlap. I never look back. I am not interested in reliving the past."

Anderson has three children from his first marriage when he was fresh from university. That marriage broke down in 1976. He met Daniela, a former refugee who speaks five languages, on a plane flying from London to Los Angeles.

"You could say I won her on the flip of a coin — although she wouldn't appreciate me saying that. The airline had overbooked and there were two of us left at the counter with confirmed first-class seats. Instead of squabbling, we tossed to see who got the first-class seat and who sat in economy. I lost the bet and changed my life."

He says he has led a "relatively unexciting" life. "I have gone on logically from one thing to the next and enjoyed most of it. That will continue inshallah [God willing]."

Matthew Bond

Endangered species will unite to stage an economic show-stopper

Sir Alec Guinness has announced that he will not be appearing in the West End again. He is, it seems, fed up with the blank faces of uncomprehending tourists that stare back from the stalls as he gives his emotional all on stage. He plans, instead, to confine future theatrical appearances to what he dubs the provinces, where the Queen's English is still understood, if not always spoken.

Quite how this lapse of linguistic tolerance will go down with William Davies, chairman of the British Tourist Authority, is unclear, but badly might be a good guess. Mr Davies this week called on Britain to abandon its monocultural tradition or risk losing increasingly discriminating (not to mention increasingly wealthy) overseas visitors to countries where shouting in laboured syllables is not the instant response to a foreign voice. Britain being Britain, we can be confident that Mr Davies's appeal — in English — will fail, if not on uncomprehending ears, then deaf ones.

But whatever Mr Davies's view, the theatre knight's refusal from the London limelight should not be dismissed too abruptly. After all, it does set a rather intriguing precedent. In the past few weeks, two of our leading performers have also grown accustomed to their appearances being greeted by blank, uncomprehending faces. Both were at it again this week, with John Major starring in *Les Liaisons Européennes et Dangereuses* at the Westminster Palace and Norman Lammont in *No Growth Please, We're British* at the Guildhall. Their reception may have inclined more to the incredulous than uncomprehending, but blank it undoubtedly was. Sir Alec has given them their cue, but they may yet require a prompt.

Mr Lammont's production is one of the longest-running farces ever and is packing them in at jobcentre the length and breadth of Britain.



This week came confirmation that the show had broken yet another record, with the CBI reporting that output had fallen for the 11th consecutive quarter and that jobs were still being lost at 25,000 a month. With British Steel announcing it planned to cut production 20 per cent and Ford closing its Dagenham and Southampton factories for a week, the show looks certain to run and run.

That is more than can be said for British Rail trains, again slowed to the pace of, well, the British economy, by a surprise fall of autumn leaves. The latest machine brought in by British Rail to give its trains a secure grip clearly does not work. Nor, it appears, does the one employed by the government. But BR's problems do not stop with fallen leaves. A report showed that if BR continued to be deprived of funds with which to buy new rolling stock and other equipment, the rail

manufacturers would run out of work in two years. Mind you, if the economy continues at its current pace, none of us will have anything to do in two years' time.

That is a point that is exercising the minds of more and more of the workforce — both actual and potential — and persuading more and more of them to exercise their bodies in protest. After almost a decade out of fashion, the demo is back in vogue.

This week, the popular press was much taken with the visit to a coalface by the young, female estate agent who befriended a group of miners on their recent protest march through Notting Hill and Kensington. The contrast between redundant miner and smart, London estate agent was emphasised by most papers. The similarities, however, were overlooked. But you cannot tell me that in a week

when a four-bedroom, Mayfair house sold at auction for only £287,000 that smart, London estate agents do not know a thing or two about recession. Much more of that and the likes of Knight Frank & Rutleys and Savills could soon be joining Markham Main and Silverhill in the social history books.

Given the current fad, however, a number of Victorians and Camillas are planning a seven-night dance-in protest at Annabel's nightclub, no doubt to encourage blinking but victorious as the government caves in and allows sibling's property losses to be set against parental income tax.

The new-found enthusiasm for not taking economic adversity lying down is certainly spreading, and into some unlikely areas. On Monday, English Heritage, protector of all we hold dear (and much that we don't) announced plans to shed 180 staff and find new owners for 200 of its 360 properties. Less than 48 hours later, the organisation's ancient monument advisory committee denounced the plan in pretty ancient language. Sir David Wilson, the committee's chairman, is urgently seeking a meeting with the commissioners. But will it stop there?

Elsewhere, there are deep-throated roars of disapproval at Windsor safari park, where the calling in of receivers has been followed by most of the staff being made redundant and a far nastlier fate possibly awaits many of the animals.

Can it be long before miner and estate agent, elephant and medieval tithes barn advance as one to Westminster under the banner of endangered economic species? I can already see the placards — Trumpet if you support the Windsor jumbos; The Avebury ring say no more sacrificial lambs; West End agents say sorry daddy.

The protest may play havoc with the traffic (honestly darling I was stuck behind a slow moving stone circle) but the message is clear: Mr Major, the workers are revolting.

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- FIXED RATE FANS 22
- FALLING POUND SAVES TRUSTS 22
- HOME TEAM WINS 23
- LETTERS 24

WEEKEND MONEY

THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 1992

Edited by Lindsay Cook

A Miras move is long overdue



COMMENT
LINDSAY COOK
WEEKEND MONEY EDITOR

It will be of little comfort to the 70,000 homeowners who have lost their homes since last December that the Chancellor now seems set to help the housing market. Almost a year after building societies and other mortgage lenders submitted their proposals for a change to the mortgage tax relief scheme to encourage people into the housing market may be included in next month's Autumn Statement.

It may be a year late but it will still be welcomed by all the homeowners who have managed to hold on, even though it is likely that most will not receive any direct benefit.

If a higher tax relief ceiling of £50,000 or £60,000 is given to new borrowers for a limited period it will only be paid to 10 per cent or 15 per cent of the 15 million homeowners in this country who actually move, possibly for five years.

But every other homeowner would gain from the increased number of transactions that would follow and the more optimistic valuations of any properties on the market.

If the Chancellor were to announce the Miras increase for a limited period of say, at least six months, with no closing date but the intention that it can be ended with one month's notice at any time after May 12 there would be a reason for first time buyers to start looking now rather than wait.

Those who want to move to a larger property and have been eyeing prices, would have an incentive to take a realistic price for their own homes and bargain for the best price they can on the new one, then actually make a move.

Confidence would come back into the market. Valuers who have been cautiously looking at the last three sales in an area to set a price would at least have three willing sales to willing buyers instead of knockdown auction prices of repossessed properties.

It may even take hundreds of thousands of homeowners out of the

shadow of negative equity at a stroke. Many of the people who fear their properties are worth less than their mortgage base the calculation on the valuations of neighbours' properties by nervous valuers.

Interest rate reductions have started to help those who were struggling when standard mortgage rates rose to 15.4 per cent. Properties have never been more affordable in the last 20 years but until there is confidence that prices have stopped falling homeowners will continue to stay put and pay off part of the capital sum they owe to their lenders

rather than reducing their monthly payments at the first opportunity.

If there is a decision to limit the rate of tax relief on Miras to the lower tax band of 20 per cent to pay for the movers, it would be taken on the chin by existing borrowers. They are not greedy, just frightened that the value of their main asset will keep on falling.

Last year the number of house purchases slipped to 1.3 million. This year the figure is likely to be down to 1 million. Two years of falling interest rates and

large discounts for new and first time buyers have not been sufficient to get homeowners out of the bunker and into estate agents.

The Halifax Building Society will begin to calculate its house price index on Monday for this month and everyone there will be crossing their fingers that September's catastrophic 3.1 per cent fall in house prices in one month will mean there was some readjustment upwards in October.

Trying to put the best gloss on it, prices are likely to have fallen by 7.5 per cent over 1992 despite mortgage rates continuing on a downward path to the lowest rate since 1978 with possibly more to come. An incentive to move house next year coupled with a steady of house prices and 40 per cent of existing borrowers seeing cuts in their mortgage payments of possibly more than 25 per cent when their annual

review takes place in the new year must help the mood of confidence.

The lenders must also be concerned for savers who have seen their income fall steadily for two years and will not be able to match each base rate cut with a similar fall in mortgage rates or they will have no money to fund the housing market when it picks up.

Those concerned that any false stimulus will lead to runaway prices again should not worry. There are so many properties that are waiting to be sold by lenders, desperate homeowners, beneficiaries of estates and those rented out by job movers until the market picks up, that buyers will still be spoilt for choice and will still be able to negotiate a sensible price or walk away to the next property.

Lenders and homeowners have been patient. The ideas being put forward to the Chancellor with increasing urgency have the virtue of saving public money in the longer term. Without any help buyers could stay on the sidelines waiting until they are sure that prices cannot fall any further.

A year after Maxwell, many pensioners face uncertainty

Watchdog finds schemes are still being plundered

By Sara McConnell

ROBERT Maxwell-style pension abuses are continuing and many employees stand to lose some or all of their benefits through their employer's malpractice, the Occupational Pensions Advisory Service (Opas) said yesterday.

Publishing its annual report, Opas, which advises people on their pension rights, said that it had found "a worrying number of broken pension promises during the year." The finding comes almost exactly a year after Robert Maxwell disappeared from his yacht, and it was discovered more than £400 million of funds belonging to 32,000 pensioners in his companies had disappeared.

A year on, much of the money is still missing and nothing concrete has been done to tighten up the rules to stop robbery on such a huge scale.

The number of complaints received by Opas about winding up and merging schemes, and use of pension fund surpluses by companies, had more than tripled, from 4 per cent in 1991 to 14 per cent in 1992. Opas attributed much of this rise to the continuing recession, which has led to insolvencies and the subsequent winding down of pension funds.

The figure includes examples of malpractice in company pension schemes. Don Hall, Opas chief executive, said: "Employers are going into liquidation and cannot meet their pension promises to their employees. There are lots of mini-Maxwells round the country, which although they are not on the same scale as Maxwell, have great importance for the individual."

He said there were schemes with which Opas was involved where employees had received reduced benefits because the employer had not paid over employees' contributions deducted from pay to the trustee or insurer running the scheme or because employers had not paid promised contributions.



"Don't pressure honest managers, just the rogues": Margaret Grainger, Opas president

In about 10 cases, employees stood to lose all their benefits because firms in trouble used pension fund money to prop up ailing finances. These problems often occur in small firms, where the employer is sole pension fund trustee.

In one case last year, a man contacted Opas because his pension had not been paid nine months after it was due in November 1990 and he could not get any response

since the remaining assets of the fund are unlikely to be adequate even to meeting existing pensions in payment. Recent changes in legislation restrict investment of pension funds in the employer company to 5 per cent of fund assets but transitional arrangements for companies with high levels of self investment mean this may take some time to be reached.

Another employee at a dif-

ficulty. The cheque then bounced and it emerged that the sole trader employer was about to be made bankrupt.

Opas said: "We concluded that the employer as the only trustee available in 1990 had misappropriated the transfer monies for his own use and there was therefore evidence of theft." With the support of Opas, the employee went to the police, who are still investigating. Opas then received three more complaints from scheme members. They were told to go to the police and the Pensions Ombudsman.

Margaret Grainger, Opas president, said: "I am convinced no regulation can ever stop the rogues. However, we must be careful not to press for regulation which will put pressure on honest scheme managers but not stop the rogues." But any big changes in legislation are at least two years away, said Sean Hand, head of the pensions unit at Cameron Markby Hewitt, a London solicitor. These will depend on the conclusions of the Goode committee, set up to review pensions law. It is not due to report until next year.

Maxwell victims just left waiting

THOUSANDS of Maxwell pensioners are expected to attend a rally in Westminster next Wednesday, the first anniversary of Robert Maxwell's disappearance. They will call on the government to take responsibility for the theft of £458 million of pension money and underwrite future pension provision for 20,000 former employees of Maxwell companies (Sara McConnell writes).

John Mitchell, a national official of the Graphical, Paper and Media Union and one of the organisers of the rally said: "Our objective is to get the government to shoulder the responsibility. It was the leaky sieve of legislation which provided the opportunity for Maxwell to take the money. The government should underwrite the pensions." An earlier rally was attended by 3,000 people and Mr Mitchell said he would be happy to see the same number of people this year.

Only 12,000 pensioners have had their pensions safeguarded by Mirror Group Newspapers.

The remaining 20,000 pensioners are still without any prospect of secure pension provision, out of 32,000 employees involved with Maxwell schemes originally. These



Rallying point: Maxwell protesters lobbying parliament

people have to rely on government grants and contributions from the private sector to fund their pensions.

Of a £2.5 million emergency fund set up this July to defray money into Maxwell pension funds, £1 million has been used to ensure pensions already being paid from eight schemes continued to be paid until the end of this month. The fund is administered by

the government's Maxwell Pensions Unit and is distributed to trustees in the form of repayable grants.

When the whole fund runs out, which is likely next spring, pensioners will have to rely on private donations. The Maxwell Pensioners Trust was also set up in July and to date has attracted just under £6 million in voluntary contributions from organisations including

the National Association of Pension Funds. Payments are being made to 86 pensioners who were receiving ex-gratia payments from Maxwell schemes.

About £136 million of pension fund assets remain frozen in the Common Investment Fund, formerly operated by Bishopsgate Investment Management, pending a court ruling on how it should be allocated between the Maxwell pension schemes.

Peter Lilley, social security secretary, said this week that the government would defer collecting national insurance contributions due from Maxwell pension schemes to ease the strain on the funds. This would amount to an interest-free loan of about £100 million to the scheme trustees. But he added: "This will not close the gap between the Maxwell schemes' liabilities and assets. For that we still need substantial contributions to the trust. I hope this further example of government support will encourage those companies and institutions who have not so far felt able to contribute to the Trust to reconsider their position." Mr Lilley's announcement was greeted with scepticism by Mr Mitchell. He said: "No-one has talked to us about it and explained how it's going to help the pensioners."

Hard work saving for a good life with the silver set

THOSE who do not want to take a drop in their standard of living when they retire could have to put up to a fifth of their annual salary into their pension for up to 30 years. These proportions are likely to rise as people live longer, forcing insurance companies to raise the price of annuities bought with pension funds.

Figures from the Central Statistical Office showed Britons are living on average three decades longer than at the turn of the century. Nigel Bodie, a partner at R Watson, the actuary, said people should aim to make enough contributions to give them two-thirds of their final salary throughout retirement. This is the most someone would get after working for the same company for 40 years and contributing to the company's pension scheme throughout their career. But most employees change jobs several times and thus lose the chance of a maximum pension unless they raise the level of their contributions.

The maximum payout of

two-thirds final salary assumes some of the remainder will be made up by state pension benefits, including a flat-rate annual state pension for a single person of £2,815 and benefit from the state earnings-related pension scheme. Married couples over 65 will also benefit from a higher allowance of £2,465. This rises at the age of 75 to £2,505.

Even if retired people do not spend their money on the same things as when they are working, it does not follow that they need less money. They no longer have to pay for work-related costs like travel and working clothes and may well have paid off all or most of their mortgage. But they may face increased health costs, they are at home all the

time so incur larger heating and lighting bills and they may have to buy and run a car to replace a company car.

Mercer Fraser, the actuary, calculated a male aged 50 and retiring at 55, who had paid into one company's final salary scheme since he was 25, then left and joined another company with a money-purchase scheme, would have to put 15.3 per cent of his gross annual salary into the scheme each year until retirement to keep up his standard of living.

Under Revenue rules, scheme members are only allowed to put 15 per cent of salary into a company pension to get tax relief so the employer would need to contribute. Even retiring at 65, the same man would need to set aside 8.6 per cent of gross

salary. If the same man with 25 years in a final salary scheme became self-employed or did not have a company scheme and wanted to retire at 55, he would need to put 17.7 per cent of his salary into a personal pension every year from 50 to retirement age. The maximum under Revenue rules is 30 per cent. A personal pension is more expensive because charges are paid by the individual. A woman of 30 who had paid into a final salary scheme since she was 25, then started to pay into another company's money-purchase scheme, would need to put 16.9 per cent of her gross salary into the scheme to keep up her lifestyle when retiring at 55. Retiring at 60 would cut her contribution to 13 per cent. These figures assume an investment return of 9 per cent a year on the company money purchase scheme and 8 per cent on the personal pension. They allow for salary increases of 7 per cent a year and inflation at 5 per cent.

SARA MCCONNELL

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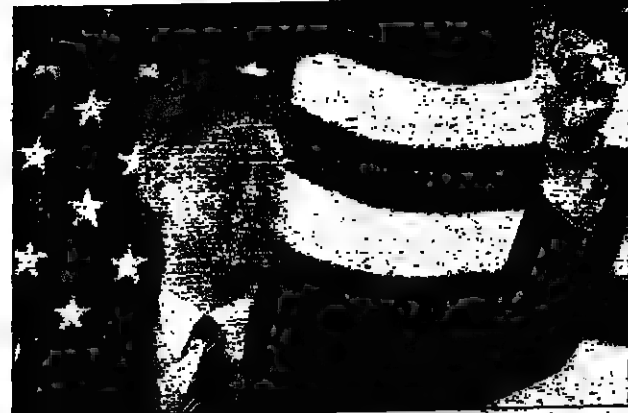
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Fall in pound saves trusts invested in US

By Liz Dolan

THE recent surge in the value of the dollar has rescued unit trust managers with funds invested in North America. Mike Payne, a senior director at Legal & General, said without the dollar's rise, people who invested in the company's North American Trust in January would be sitting on a loss. He says the 16 per cent rise in the value of units was due entirely to currency movements in the past six weeks.

At the beginning of September, when the pound was at \$2, the value of units in the fund was 2 per cent lower than in January when the pound was worth \$1.87. Since the ERM withdrawal on September 16, the pound has collapsed to \$1.56, and is still falling. Since the beginning of the year, the Dow Jones average of 30 US blue chips has risen by 2 per cent. Over the same period, the dollar has improved 19 per cent against sterling. Therefore, without the pound's collapse, L & G's



Bullish, but discounted by the markets: Bill Clinton

fund managers would have had some explaining to do.

Figures for the three American trusts managed by M & G tell a similar tale. Since January, the offer price of units in the American and General Trust has grown by 19.8 per cent to 362.7p. For the American Recovery Fund, it has improved by 16.1 per cent to 335.1p and, for the American Smaller Companies Trust, by 15.4 per cent to 99.6p. All but one are therefore showing a

loss over the ten months, at level dollar rates, even before the growth in average equity values is taken into account.

Fund managers at Barclays are bullish about US equities. David Chapman, product manager at Barclays Unicorn, said: "We think we really are now seeing the bottom of the US recession. Our view is that the markets have already discounted a Clinton win so there will be no adverse reaction if he does so."

Fixed-rate fans rue rushing in at 11%

HOMEBUYERS who rushed to get loans with rates fixed at 10, or even 11, per cent during last month's 15 per cent rate panic, will be upset to learn many lenders are now offering fixed-rate loans below 8 per cent (Liz Dolan writes).

The Woolwich has a two-year fixed-rate loan at 7.45 per cent (APR 9.4 per cent), which must be either endowment or pension-linked. It says this represents a saving of £55.52 a month at its current 9.3 per cent variable rate on a £50,000 loan. It has cut the rate on its 10-year fixed-rate mortgage from 9.99 per cent to 9.25 per cent. Application fee for the two-year plan is £255 and, for the ten-year one, £290.

The Strand & Swindon Building Society is marketing interest-only and repayment mortgages with rates fixed at 7.5 per cent (APR 9.4 per cent) for two years. The application fee is £150 and buildings insurance must be arranged via the society. Birmingham Midshires' borrowers have three new loans to choose from. One is fixed at 7.25 per cent (APR 9.3 per cent) for two years, another is capped at 7.99 per cent (APR 9.5 per cent), also for two years, and a third is fixed at 8.45 per cent (9.4 per cent) for five years. Arrangement fees are £195, £225 and £295.

A new mortgage from Lloyds Bank is pegged at 7.99 per cent (APR 9.6 per cent) until the end of 1994. The loan must be linked to a Black Horse endowment or pension policy, "at least in part", and the commitment fee is £250.

Cheltenham & Gloucester Building Society is now giving a discount on smaller, against larger loans. Loans of up to £60,000, and up to 60 per cent of the property's value, now qualify for a 2 per cent discount - to 7.05 per cent at current rates - for the first 12 months. There is also a 1 per cent discount for 12 months on any size of loan up to 80 per cent. Newcastle Building Society is cutting its variable rate by 1.5 percentage points to 9.25 per cent (APR 10.1 per cent) on November 30.

L&G Pep guarantees safety

By Lindsay Cook

A PERSONAL equity plan investing in a risky unit trust is launched on Monday with a guarantee that whatever happens to the companies it buys shares in, the investors cannot lose money over five years. The Guaranteed Pep from Legal & General invests in the company's UK Recovery Trust, which chooses companies that are regarded as undervalued and therefore in a good position to benefit from a recovery. Many of them are smaller companies and as such are more volatile than blue chip stocks. The fund is managed by Lesley Hooper, who has been a member of the L&G UK equity team for eight years.

While the group is cutting the initial charge on its other five funds to 3 per cent, the guaranteed plan will have a front end charge of 5.5 per



Hooper: fund manager

cent. The difference will be used to buy an L & G insurance policy that will guarantee no loss of investment over five years. There will be no need to divest to qualify for the money. The group will scan the Peps at the fifth anniversary of the investment and if any are showing a loss a

cheque will be despatched to them. It will then be up to them whether they withdraw the rest of the investment or wait for an upturn.

Fidelity Investments is also looking towards safer investments with the launch of a range of stabiliser funds covering the UK, European, American and Japanese stockmarkets.

The four funds are authorised futures and options unit trusts and will use these derivatives to hedge against downward movements in the markets. This method has not been available to small investors before.

The funds, which are launched on Monday, have a minimum investment of £1,000, and the initial charge is 5.25 per cent with an annual one of 1.5 per cent. Those investing before November 23 will get a 1 per cent bonus.

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Source: Save & Prosper/Microcap.

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THE INVESTMENT HOUSE



Policies to play safe, rather than sorry

Despite stringent safety precautions at big displays, many children are still injured by fireworks every year, writes **Liz Dolan**

LAST year, 723 people were injured by fireworks in the month leading up to Guy Fawkes night. Most of them — 460 — were children. The numbers are declining as safety standards improve, last year's figure was 11 per cent lower than 1990, but that is no consolation to either the victims or their parents.

Accidents with fireworks are

normally avoidable, but it is impossible to protect children from all forms of injury. The Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents says there were more than three million accidents involving children up to 19 years of age last year. A few insurance companies offer personal accident policies specially designed for children. Some only pay out for

permanent disability or death. These are comparatively rare events and premiums to cover them are very low. In the past few years, there has been a move towards more comprehensive policies that take in non-permanent injuries requiring hospitalisation.

Personal Assurance, based in Milton Keynes, has seen an enormous upsurge in demand for children's personal accident cover in recent months. Christopher Johnson, managing director, says the most likely reason is the increased desire for security during a recession. "At times like this, our policies always sell very

well." His company sees an increase in claims around Bonfire Night every year and "I see no reason why this year should be any different."

Personal Assurance markets two plans for children. Childsafe, which has been on the market since 1986, pays lump sums for disabilities, plus benefit for accidents that require in-patient attention in hospital. "Firework accidents are much more likely to require hospital treatment that does not result in lost limbs," he says. Childsafe has never had to pay lump sum benefits to any of its 1,000 policyholders, but has settled many plenty of hospital claims.

Children's Hospital Plan, launched two years ago, has proved more popular as it covers illness as well as accidents. It has sold 17,000 policies over the past two years, and is now signing up 1,000 customers a month. Both plans cost £40 a year for all family members between

three months and 16 years. Norwich Union has just cut a child's minimum age to qualify for its "Teddy Bear" contract from three years to one. The maximum age is still 17 and premiums are the same as last year's. The policy provides lump sums for death and per-

'His company experiences an increase in claims around Bonfire Night every year'

manent injury anywhere in the world. An annual £25 premium buys benefits from £100,000 for severe disability to £1,000 for the loss of movement in a little toe. About 5,500 people have been covered by the policy. A spokeswoman said a well-publicised acci-

dent, such as Prince William's golfing injury, encourages extra business. Brown Shipley, the insurance broker, has just launched its first non-school based accident policy. The Family Personal Accident Scheme, underwritten by Holmwoods, the specialist schools insurer, pays £30 a day when the child is in hospital, and also for each day recovering at home after hospitalisation. For an extra 75p a month, cover for legal expenses incurred in pursuing a claim for personal injury can be added on. The broker also offers a schools-based policy with much lower premiums because of the spread of risk.

Firstover marketed by Cigna Insurance, costs £4.50 a month for a single child, or £7 for more than one. This buys £200,000 of cover, including £50 a day for in-patient treatment for accidental injury, plus home care costs following a period of at least seven days in hospital.

Pibs scare rocks trust launch

By **LINDSAY COOK, MONEY EDITOR**

RUMOURS that the Bristol & West Building Society was set to pass an interest payment on its permanent interest bearing shares (Pibs) almost stalled the launch of a unit trust investing in them.

The rumour was quickly denied but the price of its Pibs in the secondary market

fell 7 per cent in one day this week before recovering. After all, any society that did not pay interest on its Pibs would face a run on its investment accounts and would fail. A big society rescuing one that had not paid its Pib interest would have to continue paying the interest or pay face

value of the shares. The idea that a society might not pay showed lack of understanding about a relatively new investment product. Even the Securities and Investments Board took time in allowing a fund to be launched to invest in these shares.

The unit trust, from Exeter Fund Managers, should allow smaller investors to take advantage of higher returns from the shares. The Exeter Balanced Fund will invest two thirds in Pibs and one third in zero preference shares of split level investment trusts to give some capital growth.

Pibs have the security of being issued by big building societies but should a society fail, holders of the shares would be repaid last on winding up. And the society can waive payment of the interest or cut it where payment would cause the society to have insufficient capital under the capital adequacy rules.

Because of the economy of scale of this method of raising money, the enduring nature of the stock and the possibility of interest not being paid, the return is far higher than for ordinary society accounts. Several of the 12 Pibs from 11 top 25 societies limit minimum investment to £50,000. They are therefore out of reach of small investors.

Last week, Cheltenham & Gloucester raised £100 million issuing shares with a coupon of 11.75 per cent. Minimum investment was £50,000 and they soon sold above par. The society currently pays 5.25 per cent gross on £1,000 in its Cheltenham Gold account. The new fund will be able to pool investments to allow small investors to buy into new issues of Pibs or to buy shares in the secondary market when available.

Those Pibs bought at the time of issue from the Leeds, the first into the market in June last year, would now be able to sell each £100 of shares for £117, but they pay 13.63 per cent gross forever.

The Exeter fund is launched on Wednesday with a minimum investment of £750. It has an initial charge of 5.25 per cent and an annual one of 1 per cent a year. It has an estimated gross yield of 6.5 per cent. Johnson Fry has launched a Pib portfolio requiring a minimum investment of £20,000.



Home win: Bradford & Bingley Building Society has named The Times Personal Finance National Newspaper of the Year. The premier award was presented by Baroness Denton of Wakefield to Lindsay Cook, editor of Weekend Money. Pictured (left to right) are Sara McConnell, Lindsay Cook and Karen Buckley.

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Leaseholders must be compensated when properties are repossessed

From Mrs T.A. Mansfield
Sir, Mr Trower cites an example of what he considers a "windfall gain": a long leaseholder granted a lease on a Victorian cottage in 1953 for a premium of £750, and on enfranchising it in 1991 selling it for about £200,000 with the landlord receiving approximately £30,000.

Mr Trower completely discounts the escalation in property values since 1953 and gives no indication of the condition of the property which he cites at that time, nor the leaseholder's maintenance costs and improvements to it over forty years. The vendor no doubt would need to buy a replacement home at today's prices.

The government has made clear that the 1967 Leasehold Reform Act is to be amended so that most long leasehold houses would be enfranchisable.

But that they would be valued on the special valuation basis introduced in 1974. The point that Mrs Loder-Dyer raised in her letter of October 10 Mr Trower has not addressed. Namely, why have successive governments since 1967 continued to allow ground landlords by allowing them to repossess properties at the ends of leases without the legal requirements to compensate the leaseholder?

There are many examples of unreasonable ground landlords, particularly in London, repossessing properties not built by them but by speculative builders with a freehold vacant possession value exceeding £1 million and the tenant receiving no compensation. Aside from this being unacceptable under international law, this has been an on-going "windfall gain" to landlords over many decades. Parliament should have re-

addressed this injustice in 1967, particularly as at the committee stage of the Leasehold Reform Bill MPs voted by 18 to 1 against the reasonable value restriction on enfranchisement.

Yours faithfully,
T.A. MANSFIELD,
19A The Chase,
SW4.

Greedy landlords

From Mr Roland Rench
Sir, As a lessee, I fully appreciated the points made by Mr Peter Banks (Weekend Money, October 24).

But, as many of us have sadly discovered, what starts out as reasonable observance of the spirit of a lease agreement, can deteriorate into one in which the lessee has virtually no alternative but to capitulate to the ever-increasing, greedy demands of the lessor and/or his managing agents.

For instance, I have discovered that only about three-quarters of the sum which I and co-residents have to pay each year for insurance of the property we occupy reflects the premium actually paid to the insurance company. The remainder (some £600) is imposed for "collection" and "revaluation" - tasks which, in aggregate, amount to but a few minutes of "management" time.

I suspect that Mr Banks has not been at the receiving end of such treatment - and of many aspects of exploitation which I could exemplify.

If he had, then I am sure he would be fully supportive of what the government is aiming to do in this long-neglected field. Yours faithfully,
ROLAND RENCH,
8 Minshall Place,
Park Road,
Beckenham,
Kent.

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From B. Hall
Sir, Am I unlucky in having chosen to deal with organisations with such lengthy names?

When paying my monthly Marks & Spencer Chargecard account, I am asked to make the cheque payable to "Marks & Spencer Financial Services". When I complained to the Customer Services Department about the length and suggested that perhaps "M&S FS" would do instead, I received a courteous phone response confirming that this was so. But their customers at large haven't benefited from the advice.

When depositing into a

Cheltenham and Gloucester Building Society London Share Account I am told the cheque should be made payable to "C&G London Investment Division Account No. ...". Surely "C&G A/C No. ..." would be sufficient? Please could such organisations spare a thought for their thousands of customers who have to write cheques by hand. A shorter payee name would be much appreciated and indeed might give them a competitive business edge. Yours faithfully,
B. HALL,
6 Willowherb Close,
Prestbury,
Cheshire, Chas.

Some Xtra effort needed at Halifax

From Mr Denis Peel
Sir, I have to thank you for drawing my attention to the way the Halifax is treating its small investors.

My reply from the Halifax when I complained about not being informed about changes to our Instant Xtra account was:

"the cost of writing to millions of customers prohibits such action and would inevitably affect the interest rates offered."

"To overcome this problem, extensive promotion takes place both in the national press (and sometimes on television) and also in all Halifax offices."

I agree with the sentiments of J. Wildin (Letters, October 24), and feel that a very poor deal is given to many people who are not in a position to visit Halifax offices and who do not watch television advertisements, and who are being paid derisory interest on their out of date accounts.

However, I feel the way forward is to put up a motion to the annual general meeting to compel our society to inform us, its members, of all future changes in writing. Yours faithfully,
DENIS PEEL,
18 Stephenson Terrace,
Wylam,
Northumberland.

High medical fees cause the high charges for medical insurance

From R.E. Killparick
Sir, In "Weekend Money" your correspondent Mr Gordon Connolly (Letters October 17) complains about the very great increase in medical insurance premiums that are charged by BUPA.

In complaining about the large increase I feel that Mr Connolly is being less than fair to BUPA. He appears to have overlooked the very large loss that

BUPA experienced in its operations.

The real fault for the high cost of premiums must result from the high charges for private medical treatment.

Market forces do not operate in the context of medical charges.

How, for example, can a patient shop around for the lowest cost for a required operation? It does seem to me that if

one is a member of BUPA or the like the GP is more than ready to suggest a consultation with a specialist.

If private medical insurance is to continue as a viable proposition it rests with the medical profession to contain costs.

Yours faithfully,
R.E. KILLPARICK,
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is intended to help people before they receive a court summons or their debts get out of control.

☐ The Stroud & Swindon Building Society is currently paying 10 per cent on its high-rate one-year bond on sums between £2,000 and £25,000 and guarantees it will not fall until next year. After that it will become variable but will be at least 2.5 per cent above the first tier of the society's Classic Gold account.

☐ Midland Bank is to cut the interest rates on its Access Visa and combined accounts from 1.9 per cent a month to 1.8 per cent a month from December 1. The annual percentage rate falls from 26.8 per cent to 25.3 per cent for purchases and from 28.8 per cent to 27.3 per cent for cash advances. The bank is also cutting its interest rates for savings by up to 1 per cent gross. This means its high-interest cheque account is now paying 2.81 per cent net on sums up to £9,999 and its

Saver Plus account is paying 2.62 per cent net on sums up to £1,999. On £60,000 the Meridian account pays 5.58 per cent net.

☐ Fleming Investment Trust Management, is giving holders of the 10 regional water shares the chance to swap them for one of the group's investment trusts during November. There is a flat fee of £7.50 for selling the shares and 1 per cent front-end charge for investing in the 14 funds, except for the Fleming Overseas Investment Trust which will have no front end fee during the month.

☐ A personal equity plan with no initial charge and a fixed annual administration charge of £15 per holding is on offer from Waters Lunnies, the stock broking arm of the Norwich & Peterborough building society. Investors can put between £1,200 and £6,000 in up to five different stocks in any tax year and £3,000 in any one company's stock. They can choose whether

to have the Pep managed on their behalf or whether to pick their own shares. Dealing rates for switching stocks are 1.2 per cent (minimum £17) for execution only trades and 1.85 per cent (minimum £20) for advisory trades.

☐ Murray Johnstone has launched a free stock transfer service for charities to help nearly 40,000 left to fend for themselves when the Official Custodian for Charities is being wound down. A brochure explaining the way shareholdings can be swapped for units in Murray Johnstone's funds is available by telephoning 0800 833575.

☐ The Skipton building society is launching a personal equity plan which guarantees return of the original investment after five years plus tax-free income and growth. The Pep is based on Legal & General's UK Recovery Trust which invests in companies it considers undervalued.

☐ Friends Provident is to

introduce a unit linked endowment savings plan with a flexible term of 10 to 35 years. Investors can choose to raise contributions to keep pace with inflation and can increase their savings on the fifth and 10th anniversaries of the plan. The value of the plan is not guaranteed.

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THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 1992

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French-style hurdles put to test in three Warwick races

RACE SPECIALISTS

6 winners from 23 seasons, 55.1%; T. Thorneau
D. Murray Shanks, 4 from 10, 29.1%, O
50.4%; R. Kelsky, 6 from 30, 20.0%; D. Mackler, 3
4 winners from 20 seasons, 50.0%; R. Thorneau,
Parnell, 3 from 10, 30.0%; Peter Thorneau, 3 from
10, 14.8%; D. Thorneau, 8 from 35, 14.3%.

PERFORMED FIRST TIME

10 Dukes Of Buckhorn, 3 from

SPORT

SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 1992

BSJA split over claims that the bank which caused Sir Arkay's death did not follow previous constructions

Wembley show accused of ignoring advice



Tragic slip: Sir Arkay loses his footing on the controversial Wembley bank

THE organisers of the Horse of the Year Show were yesterday accused of ignoring important advice on the construction of the Wembley bank which caused the death of the Swiss horse, Sir Arkay, three weeks ago.

In a move which threatens to split the British Show Jumping Association (BSJA), Douglas Bunn, the chairman of the selectors, has issued a statement claiming that the show — organised by the BSJA under the chairmanship of Michael Bates — dismissed reports from three leading course designers that the proposed bank was "too high, too steep and too narrow".

According to the statement the three designers, Jon Doney, Alan Oliver and Alan Ball, were shown the proposed dimensions for the bank on July 8 at a meeting of the Horse of the Year Show working party at Stoneleigh.

After 40 minutes working out the measurements, the three men told Andrew Findling, the secretary general of the BSJA, that the plans were not feasible. They were then told the construction of the bank would go ahead as

planned and were not consulted again.

Findling was not available for comment yesterday but a spokesman for the BSJA said that the bank being discussed in July was a much higher and steeper bank than the one used at Wembley. It was the first time that a bank had been used indoors in Britain.

The BSJA's claims that the Wembley bank was modelled on the one at Noel C Duggan's Millstreet show here were also refuted in Bunn's statement. "The Millstreet bank bore no resemblance to the contraption at Wembley," Bunn said, "in that the descent at Millstreet was infinitely less severe and, in fact, came out all of 11 feet whereas the Wembley one only came out 7ft 10in." A look at Duggan's bank yesterday confirmed these findings. Bunn, who last month lost to Bates in the election for the presidency of the British Equestrian Federation, also accused Bates of issuing an instruction forbidding anyone but the chairman or the press officer of the BSJA from making a statement concerning the accident.

FROM JENNY MACARTHUR IN MILLSTREET, COUNTY CORK

Yesterday Bates dismissed the accusation. "It's nonsense, an awful lot of what Douglas says has no foundation but it's very serious and I intend to call a meeting of the executive committee of the BSJA to discuss the statement," Bates said that he had not been directly involved in the building of the bank and that, as far as he knew, Brian Perry, the builder of the bank, had followed detailed drawings sent by Duggan.



Bates' accusations

"I hadn't seen the Millstreet one," Bates said, "but I was told ours was less steep and that is what I believed."

Duggan said yesterday: "I was asked to go to London last December to meet Andrew Findling and Brian Perry to give advice on the bank. Findling did not appear for the meeting. I took plans of my own bank with me but Brian Perry already had a plan of the type of bank they wanted."

In reply to Bunn's accusations the BSJA issued a statement yesterday saying that they were "dismayed" to find that deliberations from a meeting of the Horse of the Year Show committee held on Wednesday had been made public.

"The final decision of the committee was to close the matter as a tragic accident, which nobody wished to have happened. We deplore the circumstances in which the trust of the committee has been betrayed and believe the allegations are best handled privately by the executive committee."

Because of the furore over the Wembley bank, Duggan has made his bank, to be

jumped in the Derby event tomorrow evening, easier — even though all 40 horses in the competition last year jumped down without incident. An eight-foot wide ledge has been constructed halfway down. Horses then jump off the ledge as though off a smaller bank.

"I didn't want to change it but the last thing the sport needs is any more bad publicity so I changed it against the million-to-one chance that there might be another accident," Duggan said.

His bank is built, like that at Wembley, with rubber-faced bricks but, unlike Wembley has a base of concrete panels. It is an attractive fence, unlikely to spook the horses and does bear no similarity to Wembley's more makeshift structure.

The eight-year-old Sir Arkay, ridden by Jurg Friedli, was not wearing studs when he was third to go in the Everest Derby at Wembley. Half way down the bank, Sir Arkay lost his footing and broke his near foreleg. He was put down immediately and the bank was removed from the competition.

Dwyer wants tour grand slam target

FROM DAVID HANDS IN DUBLIN

BOB Dwyer, Australia's rugby union coach, regrets that his world champions will not have the opportunity to play all four home unions on their tour. On the eve of the international against Ireland at Lansdowne Road today he called for a change in the touring pattern which would allow incoming teams to challenge for their own "grand slam".

The last team to achieve that was also Australian — Andrew Slack's team in 1984. That was the last long tour of Britain and Ireland, consisting of 18 matches. Since then few countries have undertaken tours of more than 13 games and the major overseas unions have had to be content with a division: the 1988 Australians played England and Scotland, the 1989 New Zealanders faced Ireland and Wales, as do these Australians and next year the All Blacks will play England and Scotland.

But Dwyer believes the re-

turn to the touring schedule of South Africa could alter the structure yet again. Given three major touring countries there would, he believes, be enough to go around for the home unions.

"I appreciate that players these days regard six weeks as the longest they can be away on tour, though in Australia we think seven is about the mark," Dwyer said in Dublin.

A casualty of Dwyer's scenario might be the traditional end-of-tour Barbarians match, but a British tour including more internationals is not so far removed from what, for example, the All Blacks played in Australia this year (three internationals, plus Queensland and NSW) and what the British Isles will face in New Zealand next summer (three internationals, plus Auckland).

Ireland's passion, page 27
Tour cancelled, page 27

Ruddock looks razor-sharp

BY SRIKUMAR SEN BOXING CORRESPONDENT

AFTER their head-to-head on Thursday, Lennox Lewis, the British and Commonwealth heavyweight boxing champion, and Donovan "Razor" Ruddock, the World Boxing Council (WBC) No. 1, were measuring up each other again yesterday at the weigh-in at the White House, London, for their world heavyweight championship eliminator tonight.

Both showed definite signs of how seriously they had been training for the last eight weeks. Lewis in the Boconos Mountains, Pennsylvania, and Ruddock at Palmas del Mar, in Puerto Rico. Lewis weighed 16st 3lb 8oz, five pounds lighter than when he met Mike Dixon in August. Ruddock scaled 16st 7lb 6oz, seven pounds lighter than his weight for the second meeting with Mike Tyson last year.

While Lewis was impressive and alert against Dixon, Ruddock did not look particularly quick against Tyson. But both men can be expected to be sharp this time. Lewis to avoid the big knockout left hook, and Ruddock to beat Lewis to the jab. Ruddock's trainer, Floyd Patterson, the former double world heavyweight champion, said: "Any weight you take off makes a big difference. I know when I was lighter I was much better."

Ruddock said: "I know what I am. I know what I've got. You are looking at the man who is going to be the next world heavyweight champion."

Meldrick Taylor, the world WBC welterweight champion, and Caranto Espana, who boxes out of Belfast, also weighed in for their world championship bout on the same card, which promises to be of the highest class. Taylor, who is one of the finest boxers in the United States, and



Fighting fit: Lewis weighed in yesterday 5lb lighter than for his bout against Dixon

comes from the same stable as Evander Holyfield, the world heavyweight champion, did not mind that the big men had been getting all the attention in the build-up.

"It doesn't bother me," Taylor said. "They are heavyweights, they deserve respect. I am already known. I am a world champion. You are going to see the old Meldrick Taylor of the 1984 Olympics."

Taylor won a featherweight gold medal in those Olympics. Taylor, 27-2-1, knows that if he wins he will get a chance to avenge his defeat by the great Julio Cesar Travez, of Mexico.

His trainer, Lou Dupa said: "For pure excitement this is the fight to watch. We know it is going to be a tough fight but in the eight years I have been associated with Meldrick, I have never known him to be so motivated. BJ Eastwood, Espana's manager, said: "He has been waiting three years to fight for the world championship. If Taylor beats him he must be a superman. Espana will win in five rounds."

The show at Earls Court tonight, which is the finest programme put on for many years in Britain, has sold 9,000 tickets in a hall with a

capacity of 17,000. The heavyweight bout will go on at 1am tomorrow morning. The programme will be shown by HBO in the United States and Sky TV in Britain.

After the weigh-in, Nigel Benn was given his WBC super-middleweight belt by Jose Suliman, the president of the WBC.

Benn recently became the first Briton to win two world titles abroad, when he went to Rome and took the title from Mauro Galvano, of Italy.

Battling Briton, page 30

Ireland agrees to Blackburn move

BY LOUISE TAYLOR

KENNY Dalglish returned to the transfer market yet again yesterday and brought Simon Ireland to the Premier League leaders, Blackburn Rovers, for £200,000 from Huddersfield Town. The winger, 20, has played only 25 games for the struggling second division side, scoring just one goal — against Blackburn in the Coca-Cola Cup.

So impressed was Dalglish with that one goal — which left Blackburn within five minutes of being knocked out of the second round of the competition — that he offered Huddersfield the £200,000 with a further £50,000 to come if Ireland makes 50 first-team appearances. The Yorkshire side will receive 20 per cent of any future profit Blackburn make on the player.

The transfer represents potentially the biggest deal in Huddersfield's history and Ian Ross, their manager and a friend of Dalglish from their schooldays in Glasgow, said: "This is very big business for Huddersfield Town, but it is also a great opportunity for Simon to prove himself at the highest level."

By Dalglish's standards, it is a modest piece of business, but one which should keep Stuart Ripley, the impressive £1.2 million winger Blackburn signed from Middlesbrough this summer, on his toes. Ripley faces a late fitness test on his injured back before today's Premier League match at Sheffield Wednesday, but Ireland signed too late to be involved.

The result of a referendum held by Sunderland to determine whether their supporters want to move from Roker Park to a £120 million complex featuring a 48,000 all-seater stadium will be officially

announced on Monday. It is understood that the club has achieved a landslide in favour of relocation, with fewer than 3,000 of Sunderland's 35,440 members registering objections at the Football League. Sunderland are due to be playing at the new ground, five miles away at Washington, in three years' time.

Sunderland, who are fifth from bottom of the first division, were expected to sign John Firth, the Birmingham City full back, for £350,000 yesterday, but the move hit a last-minute hitch. Malcolm Crosby, the Sunderland manager, is still optimistic of recruiting Firth in time for Tuesday night's match against Wolverhampton Wanderers.

Today, Sunderland are at home to Notts County and will donate £1 for every supporter at the match to Sunderland City Council's fund for local miners. Miners fighting for the future of northeast pits will march around Roker Park before kick-off.

Brentford, fourth from the foot of the first division, yesterday signed Shane Westley, a central defender, from Wolverhampton Wanderers for £100,000. Queens Park Rangers have persuaded Les Ferdinand, their promising young striker, to sign a new three-year contract.

Stig Inge Bjornebye, a Norwegian international midfielder player, is thinking over a mooted £500,000 move from Rosenborg, of Norway, to Liverpool. The player fears that a lack of a guaranteed place at Anfield could jeopardise his international career. Graeme Souness, the Liverpool manager, is keen to ally Bjornebye's fears.

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Poison pen hard to swallow

Miami

If he has any sense — and the jury is still out — Edwin Pope will not rush forward to congratulate Francois Boutin should Arazzi win the Breeders' Cup Mile this afternoon.

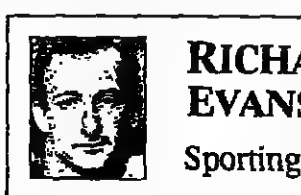
Apart from being sports editor of the Miami Herald, Pope is past master of the insult and his chosen target this week would appear to have been Boutin. I say "appear", because the character he depicted bore no resemblance to the silver-haired Lamorlaye trainer who, to

front-page article headlined "Arazzi's trainer: hoof in mouth", which carried on to an inside page entitled "Arazzi's trainer is a snooty sort".

"Boutin is Arazzi's aristocratic-looking and autocratic French trainer," he said for openers, before describing "Boutin's penchant for jamming his foot and half his leg in his mouth on the infrequent occasions he opens it other than to eat".

There then followed a diatribe in which he accused Boutin of objectionable secrecy, regal snootiness and smuggling Arazzi on to the racetrack shortly after 7am "in front of a corporal's guard of insomniacs".

Pope's inaccurate and offensive article only serves to underline the kid-glove treatment meted out to racing



RICHARD EVANS
Sporting Diary

While Mr Major was being doped-tested at Fontwell after flopping in the Vintage Veuve Clicquot handicap hurdle, Bubba Clinton obliged, at 37-1, at Garden State Park, New Jersey.

Meanwhile, in the real

race, a Florida columnist offered this analysis: "Let us give first prize in this sleazy competition to Ross Perot... Step forward, partner, and accept this paper-wrapped pound of maggoty meat. It's as rotten as you are."

A dough nut

The fortune Verne H. Winchell made out of doughnuts enabled him to indulge in his passion for horses.



Shake-up at Gulfstream

Incredibly, the ubiquitous silks of the four Maloum brothers will be notable by their absence at Gulfstream Park for racing's world championships. Although Shaikh Mohammed — referred to here as His Sheikhness — splashed out \$9 million for a half-share of Arazzi last year, the horse carries the colours of Allen Paulson when running in the United States. Lion Cavern, entered for the Mile, was judged not to be good enough to run.

By contrast, the tremendous racing success enjoyed by Khaled Abdullah, a Saudi Arabian owner, is reflected in

"These animals are soul and blood and flesh. They are not machines. Sometimes you hit the jackpot. Sometimes you don't," he says.

Running marvel

Fred Lebow, founder and director of the New York marathon, which is run tomorrow, should, by all rights, be dead. In early 1990 he was diagnosed with a malignant brain tumour. Doctors operated twice and told him he would be lucky to live six months. A year later, thyroid cancer was discovered and the surgeon's knife was welded once again. Amazingly, he has survived it all and tomorrow, for the first time since the marathon's inception in 1970, the 60-year-old runner



LYNNE TRUSS
Poetry and prose
in Poppy-Land

Page 3



ALAN COREN
Of pilchards and
pan-menders

Page 8



CAITLIN MORAN
On London's dark,
mean streets

Page 18

**CHEAP WINES
BY JANE
MACQUITTY**
Page 5

WEEKEND

3

THE TIMES SATURDAY OCTOBER 31 1992

Revolutions in pyrotechnic magic

As bonfire night
approaches

Anthony Gardner
thrills to both
professional
displays and
garden amateurs

In the darkness of a windy rooftop 200ft above the West End, Andrew Jolliffe presses an illuminated button on his computer console. Two Chinese crackers, each producing a thousand detonations in the space of a minute, begin to pepper the air with a layer of dust, grit and fragments of paper so dense that breathing them is like swallowing emery boards.

As we gasp for oxygen, the first shells whoosh into the air, and a dozen flares along the parapet erupt into fountains of sparks 20 feet high. The roof shakes underfoot with the force of the mortars; at a distance of ten yards the noise of this supposedly low-volume display is terrifying. The smell of sulphur overwhelms the nostrils, while the eyes sting with fall-out; most of the display is invisible behind the thick smoke. In the occasional moments of silence, snatches of Vivaldi drift faintly up from the gardens below.

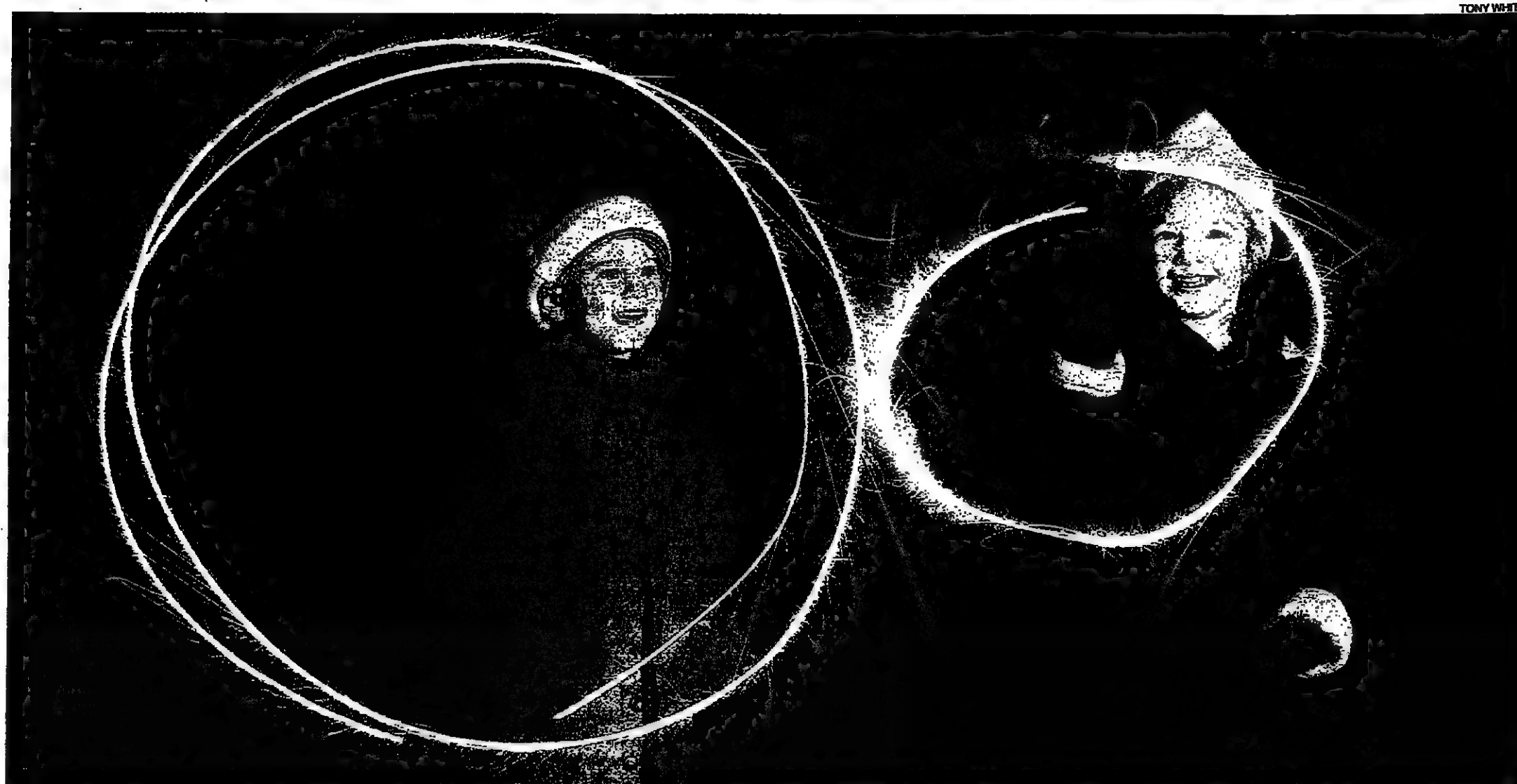
After five minutes and £2,500-worth of fireworks, the display ends with a shower of glittering stroboscopes. As the crowd applauds and begins to break up, an over-anxious security man directs a fire extinguisher at the last glowing remnants of a Chinese cracker. Apart from the DJ managing to play the wrong movement of *The Four Seasons*, the event has been an unqualified success.

All this seems a bewildering contrast to the fireworks parties of childhood — the Pains' rockets jutting from empty milk bottles, the Catherine wheels that always stopped halfway through, the packet of sparklers eked out till bedtime, the roared parental injunctions to keep to the edge of the lawn.

But it is not simply that Tetrapak cartons lack the ballistic qualities of their gold-tipped predecessors: the fireworks world as we know it has been transformed over the last 20 years.

Mr Jolliffe's company, Fox Fireworks, has invested no less than £35,000 in its computer, which is as far removed from the strike-a-match-and-run tradition as F1-11s are from the Wright brothers' flying machines. The shells still look like turnips wrapped in brown paper, and the mortar tubes are still made of wood, but the fuses are activated by electronic impulses, sent through decoders powered by the same kind of batteries as Chief's tanks. In theory, this equipment can fire displays simultaneously from several different sites, as much as 1½ miles apart.

Such technology has also given new impetus to the musical display, in which sight and sound can be



Small is beautiful: Jack White and Reiss Sage, both aged five, prove that a sparkler in the hand is worth thousands of pounds' worth of set-piece gunpowder in the sky when it comes to pleasure

synchronised as never before — although those whose enthusiasm for the 1812 Overture has worn thin may consider this a mixed blessing. A former organ-tuner, Mr Jolliffe takes a particular interest in this kind of work, as does his rival, Michael Lakin of Starlight, who will spend up to three days listening to a piece of music before designing a display around it.

Not that all fireworks (as they call themselves) are convinced by such gadgetry: everyone in the profession has a story about a display sabotaged by a power failure, or a faulty connection setting off the entire show at the same moment. It can also be hard to justify the expense.

"Electricity is useful if you want to fire a lot in a short time, or from several places at once, or you want symmetry," says the Rev Ronald Lancaster of Kimbolton Fireworks (Roman candles a speciality). "But if it's a small show, why pay much more when you can do it just as well by hand?" The degree of a fireworker's commitment to new technology is one of the things that defines his position in the pyrotechnic world — which, like any other, has its factions and snobbery.

The new-style fireworks also pride themselves on a higher degree of planning. "Tailoring the show to fit the environment is absolutely crucial," says Andrew Smiley, who runs the Suffolk-based

company Shell Shock. "There are far too many companies who just say, 'The customer wants to spend £1,500, so here's our £1,500 show.' I always ask: 'What's the display for? How many people is it for? How far away will they be?' And I always insist on going to see the site beforehand." Mr Smiley's finest hour was a display fired from a moving goods train to mark the centenary of the Tay bridge: the fact that he couldn't see much of it (because he was inside the train detonating the fireworks) appears not to worry him.

There has been a change, too, in the type of fireworks used in this country. Traditionally, British displays were based on those elaborate, but rather staid, set-pieces at ground level, which fizzed with Catherine wheels and culminated in a startling message like "THE END" or "GOOD NIGHT". Today the emphasis is much more on the neck-cracking aerial displays which the Spanish and Italians

have always favoured. Despite all these advances, though, the professional fireworkers are having a rough time of it at present. The recession means that less money is being spent on displays: at the same time, over-lighting regulations have made fireworks more expensive to make, store and transport. (Boxes for carrying

them, for instance, have to be registered with the United Nations. There is also talk of a Eurobanger, made to EC specifications.) As a result, many of the small display companies which sprang up in the Eighties have been forced to close.

The survivors complain of excessive nannying, pointing out that they can only lose by handling materials carefully. "I think it's an absolute tragedy," says Mr Lancaster. "The bureaucracy in this country is destroying British business. Why make a firework for £9 when you can buy it from China for 5p?" (To some extent, however, you get what you pay for: as anyone knows who has borne Chinese fireworks home in their mysteriously unmarked boxes, they are very, very unreliable.)

Happily, there is a positive side to all this. Standard Fireworks, the last big manufacturer in Britain, boasts that it has doubled its sales to the public over the past four years; and although this can partly be attributed to an increased share in the market, there is little doubt that the traditional back-garden display is — dare one say it — booming.

One explanation is that the draconian

safety regulations which make professionals wail and gnash their teeth have helped restore public confidence in fireworks.

"There was a definite period when there were anti-firework feelings, because accidents had been over-emphasised in the media," observes Mr Lancaster. Since the introduction of the British Standard for fireworks in 1988, however, there has been a steady fall in Guy Fawkes Night accidents, and it is the pyrotechnicians' proud boast that far fewer children are injured by errant bangers than by falling out of bunk beds.

Whether we are actually seeing a revolt against public displays is hotly debated. John Bennett, whose magazine *Fireworks* is a feast of trivia ("Barrie Nobbs confirms that [Rainbow] sparkler production stopped in 1958"), believes that nothing can beat the back garden for thrills: "You smell the smoke, and the fireworks have much greater impact. The bigger the display, the more clinical and remote."

Mel Barker, the managing director of Standard, agrees that immediacy is all, which is why fireworks are never really satisfactory on television: his most popular products — particularly with the young — tend to be the noisiest ones.

Mr Jolliffe nevertheless maintains that the organised public display is "the shape of things to

come, largely because it represents better value for money. (Display companies are invariably scathing about shop fireworks, while manufacturers are equally rude about display companies: where the humble sparkler-holder stands in their estimation, one dreads to think.) The burgeoning back-garden displays, he believes, should be seen as homage to professional ones rather than reaction against them.

In particular, he points to the rise of the co-operative extravaganzas. "Whereas you used to have a hundred families spending £10 each on a box of fireworks, you're getting them putting all their money towards a single display. And instead of buying lots of small fireworks and spending hours lighting them off, they're buying bigger sets for £300 or £400 which last for

15 minutes. That's very much an expanding market."

Britain still has a long way to go in the fireworks world. If there were a pyrotechnical ERM, we would long ago have exhausted our squib reserves in the attempt to keep up with fast-lane nations like Japan, Spain, Italy and Malta. But as the increasingly sophisticated professional displays continue to raise our expectations, there is at least hope of reevaluation.

INSIDE	
Food and drink.....	4.5
Children.....	7
Gardening.....	8
Shopping.....	9
Time off.....	10.11
Property.....	12.13
Joe Joseph on TV.....	18

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A letter arrives from Clive Anderson: "Dear Mrs Grove..." I am thrilled. But of course he is only after my money. Instead of Clive Anderson of *Whose Line Is It Anyway?*, he is Clive Anderson MA (Selwyn) 1981, addressing a fellow Cambridge graduate on behalf of The Cambridge Foundation. "If you feel Cambridge helped you in the past, now is the time to give something back," he writes, adding: "We prefer donations as a Covenant. For every £1 you give this way, we get an extra 33p from Mr N.S.H. Lamont, BA (Fitz) 1965."

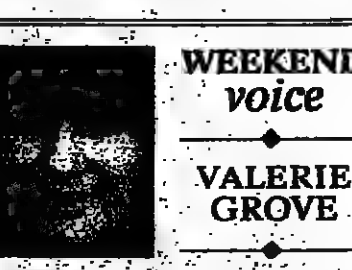
Fund-raising is fascinating. Nobody has any cash to spare, yet every post brings another invitation to spend £100 on a celebrity lunch or a Sunday night at the theatre in aid of something at £50 a seat. Not just starving babies or ill-treated horses, but famous institutions can no longer flourish without one's aid.

Cambridge has "produced more Nobel laureates than both France and the former Soviet Union combined", yet it cannot subsist on government funding. American colleges have long realised the need to make alumni feel magnanimous with gratitude, and cough up. Oxford University launched its £220 million appeal in 1988,

getting massive donations such as £20 million "from E.R. Squibb and Sons", to fund research and new pharmaceuticals.

Dear Clive Anderson, I am sorry. Cambridge was an all-male university for 600 years; let it concentrate its appeal on the generations of men graduates who have shinned up the success ladder. I too am trying to raise money for Cambridge, but for my old college, Girton: the one that broke down the male bastion and offered women the chance to take degrees for the first time. Because it was all female for its first 100 years it has never had any money. Unlike ancient men's colleges, it does not enjoy vast bequests, or own huge tracts of land and property.

So how to raise money? It was never easy, as Emily Davies, parson's daughter, discovered when she tried to found a college for women in the first place. Emily was expected, like all middle-class Victorian women, to help her parents in the parish, and wait for a husband, who never materialised. Instead she campaigned tirelessly to allow girls to sit exams hitherto



WEEKEND voice
VALERIE GROVE

open only to boys. Then she flung herself into raising funds to build her new university college for women. Women? Degrees? Send young girls away from home, to a men's university? Foolish, nonsense, doomed to failure, was the general response. She needed to raise a modest £30,000 (Harrow school had just raised £78,000 for a new building, with ease) yet she only managed to rustle up £2,000, and half of that came from one benefactress, Barbara Bodichon. Such was the unpopularity of the cause.

But eventually the handsome building, designed by Alfred Waterhouse, was built in 1873, and began the caricature Girton Girl, a bluestocking with bicycling

calves, destined to become a schoolmistress or a parson's wife. Nobody dreamed of asking her for money. Then the college went co-ed (the first women's college to do so) and Mary Warnock, Mistress until last year, began addressing undergraduates, male and female, as if they might be future financiers. She appointed a bursar from the City, and started a London fund-raising committee that included me. We raffled our collecting-bin at any moneyed old Girtonians: Arianna Stassinopoulou, Huffington, Sally Beauman, Mrs Lee Kuan Yew. A fundraising consultant came to our meetings, appropriately named Mr Diamond, who knew about BIG money. He suggested holding a dinner in a glamorous place, with a royal speaker: then we could ask £1,000 a plate. He often went to such dinners, he said...

Instead we decided to hold a symposium, to be called the Emily Davies Forum, where women from various professions could say how they feel women have progressed, 120 years after Emily's heroic struggle, and how they "balance

life's choices", i.e. raise children as well. It will be chaired by Baroness Warnock next Friday, November 6, at the Ironmongers' Hall in the City of London. Speakers will include Baroness Blackstone, Mrs Yvonne Newbold of Hanson plc, and Gillian Shepherd, the employment secretary.

More than 200 tickets have been sold at £30 each, so the hall will be full and Girton will make some money. But it turns out, from their letters, that some Old Girtonians think that £30 is too much to ask. And many consider a Friday afternoon at 4.30 — a day and time expressly arranged for Gillian Shepherd — a bad time: for women with school-age children, for those confined to the house by dependent disabled parents, and for those who, having broken into positions of power, cannot leave their desks. Or if they can, "have to rush home on Friday evenings, having been absent from the children all week".

One Old Girtonian, a chief examiner in physics, wrote to wish us well but expressed serious doubts about whether any such discussions can ever "alter the social and domestic realities of most women". She is probably right. But that, she added, was exactly the kind of response Emily Davies used to get.

FILM

LES AMANTS DU PONT NEUF (18): Luc Carra's hymn to Paris and a punk bum's love for a young artist going blind. Terrific in spirit, and a real movie. **Metro** (071-437 0757) **Renoir** (071-837 8402).

BEAUTY AND THE BEAST (U): Sumptuous Disney cartoon fairy-tale, blessed with skilled animation and attractive songs that might have sprung from a Broadway musical. Directors, Gary Trousdale, Kirk Wise.

Camden Parkway (071-267 7034) **MGM Chelsea** (071-352 5096) **MGM Oxford Street** (071-636 0310) **Odeons Kensington** (0426 914666) **Marble Arch** (0426 914501) **West End** (0426 915574) **Screen on the Hill** (071-435 3366) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

BOOMERANG (15): Preening Madison Avenue Lusho gets his comeuppance. Dislikeable Eddie Murphy vehicle. Robin Givens, Halle Berry, director, Reginald Hudlin. **MGM Baker Street** (071-935 9772) **MGM Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **MGM Oxford Street** (071-436 0310) **MGM Trocadero** (071-436 0313) **Plaza** (071-497 9999) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

1492: CONQUEST OF PARADISE (15): Lashings of atmosphere from director Ridley Scott, but not enough dramatic meat. Gérard Depardieu as Columbus, Sigourney Weaver as Queen Isabella. **Barbican** (071-636 8891) **Empire** (071-497 9999) **MGM Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **MGM Trocadero** (071-436 0313) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

THE CRYING GAME (18): IRA gunman becomes obsessed with a hostage's girlfriend. Bold, powerful Neil Jordan film that fails at the close. Stephen Rea, Forest Whitaker, Jaye Davidson, Miranda Richardson. **Camden Plaza** (071-485 2443) **Curzon West End** (071-439 4805) **MGM Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **MGM Trocadero** (071-436 0313) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

GLENGARRY GLEN ROSS (15): Real estate salesman fight for their lives. Energetic version of James L. Brooks' play, though Jack Lemmon goes over the top. Al Pacino, Ed Harris, director, James Foley. **Odeon Haymarket** (0426 915533).

HUSBANDS AND WIVES (15): Woody Allen's best film in years, a lacerating tale of collapsing New York marriages. Sherry Stringfield, Mia Farrow, Judy Davis, Liam Neeson, Juliette Lewis. **Gaiety** (071-727 4043) **Lumière Kensington** (0426 914666) **Screen on the Green** (071-226 3520) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

LOVERS (18): In Franco's Spain, Victoria Abril details her lover's intended marriage. Excellent tale of mad love, expertly filmed by director Vicente Aranda. **MGM Piccadilly** (071-437 3561).

MON PERE, CE HEROIS (PG): Flimsy adventures of a divorced father (Gérard Depardieu) and his teenage daughter on holiday in Mauritius. Marie Gillain, director, Gérard Lauzier. **Curzon Phoenix** (071-240 9661) **MGM Chelsea** (071-352 5096) **MGM Swiss Centre** (071-439 4470).

PRAGUE (12): Calford Scott searches for family history in the Czechoslovak film archive. Wispy drama with modest charms from writer-director Ian Seller. With Sandrine Bonnaire, Bruno Ganz. **Camden Parkway** (071-267 7034) **Mimema** (071-235 4225).

STRICTLY BALLROOM (PG): One dancer's fight to defy the rules of the Australian Ballroom. Dancing Federation. Excellent, intoxicating debut by director Baz Luhrmann. With Paul Mercurio, Tara Moric. **MGM Chelsea** (071-352 5096) **MGM Oxford Street** (071-636 0310) **Odeons Kensington** (0426 914666) **West End** (0426 915574) **Renoir** (071-837 8402) **Screen on the Hill** (071-435 3366) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

THUNDERHEART (15): FBI agent Val Kilmer rediscovers his Indian heritage in South Dakota. Engrossing thriller from director Michael Apted. Stars Sam Shepard, Graham Greene. **MGM Haymarket** (071-439 1527).

UNFORGIVEN (15): Clint Eastwood's mellowed gunman is forced to resurrect his lethal skills. Marvelously resonant, reflective Western. Gene Hackman, Morgan Freeman. **Barbican** (071-636 8891) **Empire** (071-497 9999) **MGM Fulham Road** (071-370 2636) **MGM Haymarket** (071-439 1527) **MGM Oxford Street** (071-636 0310) **MGM Trocadero** (071-436 0313) **Notting Hill Coronet** (071-727 6705) **UCI Whiteleys** (071-792 3332).

UNLAWFUL ENTRY (18): Sicko cop creates havoc for Los Angeles couple. Exasperating thriller with wasted potential. Ray Liotta, Madeleine Stowe, Kurt Russell, director, Jonathan Kaplan. **Odeon Leicester Square** (0426 915563).



Miranda Richardson as Jude in *The Crying Game*

THEATRE

LONDON

BREAKING BOUNDARIES: Four foreign companies play at the Tricycle and the National Theatre as part of the European Festival of Theatre for Children and Young People. From Italy: *Tutti Maestri*, for four years and up; *Nobody Blinded the Giant*, for six years and up; from Portugal: *Tomorrow*, for seven years and up; from Denmark: *Night Train* for 12 years and up. All highly visual and performed mainly in English. Performances at various times from tomorrow to next Sat (Nov 7). **Tricycle**, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (071-328 1000). **National Theatre** (Lyttelton), South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252).

AN IDEAL HUSBAND: Hannah Gordon, Anna Carter and Martin Shaw head a starchy cast in Peter Hall's production of Wilde's society drama: should a politician resign when the criminal follies of his past are discovered? **Globe**, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (071-494 5061). **Previews** from Wed, 7.45pm. **Opens** Nov 11, 7pm.

JUNE MOON: Naive songwriter conquers Tin Pan Alley. Delightful comedy by Ring Lardner and George S. Kaufman. Excellent cast led by Adam Godley and Frank Lazarus.

Vaudeville Theatre, The Strand, WC2 (071-836 9987). **Previews** tonight, Mon, Tues, 7.45pm. **Opens** Wed, 7pm, then Mon-Sat, 7.45pm. **Sat** mat, 3pm.

MAKING IT BETTER: Lust, treachery and ambition revealed as an English couple harbour two Czechoslovakian spies. James Saunders's intriguing, intelligent play. Well acted (Jane Asher and Rufus Sewell). **Criterion**, Piccadilly Circus, W1 (071-839 4488). **Mon-Fri**, 8pm, Sat, 8.30pm, **mats** Tues, 3pm, Sat, 5.30pm.

MY MATHEMATICS: Rose English, accompanied by Goldy, a palomino horse, gives two shows only of her excellently acrobatic performance as Sadler's Wells, Rosemary Avenue, London EC1 (071-278 8916). **Fri** and **next Sat**, 7.30pm.

NO MAN'S LAND: Flame stage appearance by Harold Pinter in his 1975 drama of two old friends (or are they?). With Paul Eddington. **Almeida Theatre**, Almeida Street, London N1 (071-359 4404). **Previews** tonight, 4pm, 8pm. **Opens** Mon, 7pm, then Mon-Sat, 8pm, **Sat** mat, 4pm.

THE STREET OF CROCODILES: Théâtre de Complicité presents the nightmare world of Bruno Schulz. Amazing effects, bewildering storyline. **National (Cottesloe)**, South Bank, SE1 (071-928 2252). **Today**, Mon, Tues, 7.30pm, **today**, Tues mat, 2.30pm.

THE TENDER HUSBAND: Half-way through its autumn tour the Magnificent Theatre Company arrives in London with Sir Richard Steele's sprightly comedy. **Waterside Arts Centre**, 40 Brentford High St (081-568 1176). **Opens** Tues, 8pm, **Sat**, 8pm, **mat** Sat, 5pm. **Until** Nov 14.

THREE BIRDS LIGHTING ON A FIELD: Return to Timberlake Wertenbaker's witty and penetrating look at the world of modern art. Harriet Walter excellent as the upper-class wife. **Royal Court**, Sloane Square, SW1 (071-730 1745). **Previews** from Fri, 8pm. **Opens** Nov 10, 8pm.

TROUBLE IN MIND: Vibrant staging of Alice Childers's forgotten black American play. Witty back stage banter and clearly delivered message. **Tricycle**, 269 Kilburn High Road, NW6 (071-328 1000). **Mon-Sat**, 8pm, **mat** Sat, 4pm.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA: David Thacker's winning revival. Twenties style, both comic and romantic, delightfully acted. **Barbican**, Silk Street, EC2 (071-638 8891). **Tues**, Wed, 7.15pm.

THE WICKED TRILOGY: Revival of Billy Roche's celebrated chronicles of small-town life opens with *A Handful of Stars*: young rogues make killing time in the pool halls. *Poor Beast in the Rain* and *Buffy to follow*. In repertory from Nov 23. **Bush**, Shepherd's Bush Green, W12 (081-743 3388). **Previews** Tues-Thurs, 8pm. **Opens** Fri, 7pm, **next Sat**, 8pm.

WHICH WITCH: Norwegian opera-musical on murky domes in Renaissance Europe. **Piccadilly Theatre**, Denman Street, W1 (071-867 1118). **Mon-Sat**, 7.30pm, **next Thurs**, Sat, 2.30pm.

REGIONAL

BOLTON: The Octagon's Silver Anniversary production: Bill Houghton's *Alice*, with Gary Webster and Liz Smith. **Octagon**, Howell Croft South (0204 20661). **Previews** Thurs, 7.30pm. **Opens** Fri, 7.30pm. **Then** Mon-Sat, 7.30pm.

LONDON SINFONETTA: The Sinfonietta's 25th birthday celebrations continue with this typically imaginative programme, conducted by Oliver Krussen, which brings together shorter pieces by Robin Holloway (Evening with Angels), Tchaikovsky (The Line), Elford, with Jon Gammon the tenor soloist, Dmitri Smirnov (the premiere of *The River of Life*) and Krussen himself (Cousing). **Queen Elizabeth Hall**, South Bank, London SE1 (071-928 8800), tonight, 7.30pm.

YOUNG BRAHMS: This week's offerings in the series include a concert by the Nash Ensemble and Antony Pay. Brahms's *Serenade No 1* and Weber's *Clarinet Quintet* and Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*. **Hallway** (Purcell Room, Tues, 8pm) and a vocal and piano recital by soprano Amanda Rocco and tenor Adrian Thompson, with Roger Vignoles and Peter Donohoe (Queen Elizabeth Hall, Thurs, 7.45pm). **South Bank Centre**, London SE1 (071-928 8800).

ROD WEDDING: For this operatic commission from The Women's Playhouse Trust, the composer Nicola Leitch has worked with librettist Deborah Levy on an uncompromising adaptation of Lorca's grim masterpiece. **Jules Wright** directs the production, in the atmospheric warehouse setting of London's busiest film studio. **Costumes** are by the production's set designer, Fotini Dimou, in collaboration with Nicole Farhi. **Anne Mansson** conducts. **Jacob Street Studios**, Mill Street, London SE1, (071-497 9977), tonight, Mon, Wed, Fri, **next Sat**, 7.45pm.

FALSTAFF/DOON GIOVANNI: Opera 80 has changed its name to English Touring Opera, but the aim remains the same: to take small-scale opera productions to places that might otherwise suffer neglect. This season's repertoire consists of Verdi's last, great, opera, *Falstaff*, performed in Amanda Holden's effective English translation (the one used at ENO), in a new production by Tim



Excellently eccentric Rose English and Goldy star in *My Mathematics* (see Theatre)

Courtyard Theatre, West Yorkshire Playhouse (0532 442111). **Previews** Thurs, Fri, 7.45pm. **Opens** next Sat (Nov 7), 7.45pm.

SHEFFIELD: Jack Shepherd's *Mr Rochester* troubles the heart of Emma Fielding in *Wills Hall's* adaptation of *Jane Eyre*. **Crucible**, Norfolk Street (0742 769222). **Previews** from Thurs, 7.30pm. **Opens** Nov 10.

STRATFORD-UPON-AVON: Richard Johnson and Clare Higgins star in *Antony and Cleopatra* directed by John Caird. **Lust**, murder and madness trap Cheryl Campbell and Malcolm Storry, in Middleton's *The Changeling*. **Michael Attenborough directs. And Richard McCabe plays *Marlowe* in Peter Webley's *The School of Night*. **Royal Shakespeare/The Swan/The Other Place** (0768 295623). **Antony and Cleopatra: **previews** today, 1.30pm and 7.30pm; **Mon-Wed**, 7.30pm; **opens** Thurs, 7pm. **The Changeling: **previews** today, 1.30pm and 7.30pm; **Mon**, 7.30pm; **opens** Tues, 7pm, **Wed**, Thurs, 7.30pm; **Thurs**, 1.30pm. **The School: **previews** tonight, **Mon**, Tues, 7.30pm; **opens** Wed, 7pm, **Thurs**, 1.30pm and 7.30pm.********

WIMBORNE: *Antony and Cleopatra* (081-900 1234), today, 7pm. **City Hall**, Sheffield, (0742 735295), tomorrow, 7pm. **SECC**, Glasgow, (041-248 3000), **Mon**, 6.30pm. **ABCC**, Aberdeen, (0224 824824), **Wed**, 6.30pm. **City Hall**, Newcastle, (091-261 2606), **Fri**, 7.30pm.

GREEN ON RED: The duo's evocative depiction of the underbelly of America continues on their smoky, guitar-twanging new album, *Too Much Rain*. **Leeds**, Sheffield, (0742 754500), today, 8.30pm. **King Tuts**, Glasgow, (041-221 5279), tomorrow, 9pm. **Broomfield Bar**, Birmingham, (021-459 6573), **Mon**, 8.15pm. **Mean Fiddler**, London NW10, (081-961 5490), **Tues**, 8pm. **The Grand**, London SW11, (071-738 9000), **Wed**, 7.30pm.

TAKE THAT: Currently in the top ten with "A Million Love Songs", the pop group embarks on its first substantial UK tour. **City Hall**, Newcastle, (091-261 2606), **Tues**, 7pm. **Corn Exchange**, Cambridge, (0223 357851), **Wed**, 7pm. **Hammersmith Apollo**, London W6, (081-741 4868), **Thurs**, 7pm. **Coleton Hall**, Bristol, (0272 236822), **Fri**, 7pm.

JAZZ **BOY HARBOR QUINET**: Originally championed by Wynton Marsalis, this increasingly assured young trumpetster has since had the honour of a personal invitation from Sonny Rollins to play alongside him at Carnegie Hall. He is joined here by the same tight

band that features on his joyful latest album, *The Vibe*. **Jazz Cafe**, London NW1, (071-284 4358), **Tues**, 7pm. **Music Hall**, Aberdeen, (0224 641122), **Wed**, 7.30pm. **City Hall**, Glasgow, (041-552 1816), **Thurs**, 7.30pm. **Queen's Hall**, Edinburgh, (031-688 2019), **Fri**, 7.30pm.

HONEYDEW EDWARDS: As well as being a fine bluesman, Edwards is an expert raconteur and having been around on the night that the king of Delta blues, Robert Johnson, died, he has some stories to tell. **100 Club**, London W1 (071-636 0893), tomorrow, 7.30pm.

AL JABREAU: The Severides star and exponent of cross-over, jazz-influenced pop is joined by pianist and former jazz crusader Joe Sample. **Albert Hall**, London SW7, (071-589 8212), today, tomorrow, 7.15pm.

RED ROONEY'S RED ALERT: The gifted American bebop trumpeter who played with Charlie Parker in the late 1940s is in residence for a week alongside blues better Irene Reid. **Thereafter** he will be at Ronnie Scott's Birmingham (Nov 9-14). **Ronnie Scott's**, London W1, (071-439 0747), **Mon**-**next Sat**, 8.30pm.

SALEROOMS **MONDAY**: *Truly Romantic*—a watercolour by Samuel Palmer of Keats's burial place near the Pyramid of Cestus in Rome—should make up to £9,000 at Phillips, 2pm. **Phillips**, 101 New Bond Street, London W1 (071-629 6602).

TUESDAY AND WEDNESDAY: The sale of Chinese export porcelain at Sotheby's includes a rare 18th-century "Cape of Good Hope" plate decorated for the Dutch market up to £8,000. **Tuesday** 10.30am. **There** are more Chinese export pieces in Phillips's Oriental Ceramics and works of art session on Wednesday, 11am. **Sotheby's**, New Bond Street, London W1 (071-453 8800). **Phillips** (as above).

WEDNESDAY: Italy and the ancient world come to London in two sales: one made up of antiquities and "souvenirs of the Grand Tour" at Christie's, South Kensington, 10.30am, and a

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collection of 1850s stamps of the Italian states at Sotheby's, 2pm. In Leeds, Phillips has taken Yorkshire paintings, including a Grimshaw dock scene (up to £45,000) home and offers them with sporting pictures at 11am. Bonhams is in action with jewels at the Hotel L'Horizon St Brelede's Bay, Jersey at 6.30pm. **Christie's South Kensington**, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 (071-581 7611). **Sotheby's** (as above), Phillips, Hepper House, East Parade, Leeds (0532 448011). **Bonhams**, Montpelier Street, London SW7 (071-584 9161).

WEDNESDAY-FRIDAY: Modern British and Irish paintings, drawings and sculpture occupy the London sales rooms, beginning at Sotheby's, Wednesday 11am, where Stanley Spencer's *Temptation of St Anthony* could reach £500,000. On Thursday Christie's South Kensington and Bonhams have more modern sessions of the same at 10.30am and 11am. Christie's main sale at King Street, Friday 11am includes a very different Spencer, a straightforward and peaceful view in *Saragosa*, 1922 (up to £8,000). **Sotheby's** (as above), Christie's South Kensington (as above), Bonhams (as above), Christie's, 8 King Street, St James, London SW1 (071 839 9060).

SWAN LAKE: Northern Ballet Theatre opens a two-week London season with its contentious production (choreographed by Dennis Wayne and directed by Christopher Gable) of Tchaikovsky's classic, complete with a Kissogram girl for Siegfried's 21st birthday bash and swan corpses. **Well**, at least it is original. **Ballet Theatre**, Redwood Street, off Kingsway, London WC2 (071-494 5090). **Tues**-**next Sat**, 7.30pm, **mats** Tues and **next Sat**, 2.30pm.

SWAN LAKE: The Royal Ballet offers a more straightforward production (Yolanda Sonnabend's fussy designs accepted) at Covent Garden. On Friday, *Viviana Durante* is portrayed by *Irak Mutchaladze* making his first appearance on the Covent Garden stage.

DANCE UNBELLIE: A latest chance tonight to catch the wit and manners of the Jonathan Burrows Group, started by the former Royal Ballet choreographer. On Thursday one of Britain's most popular independent choreographers, Ian Anderson, brings her all-female group *The Chomolodeys* to the ICA with her new piece *Wally*, which takes place in, on, around and under a giant bed.

CHUCK BERRY: My Rock 'n' Roll takes to the road this November. **Royal Concert Hall**, Glasgow (041-227 5511), **Fri** **The Stadium**, Dublin, (01-555 1 679 5334), **next Sat**. **Bentley's Centre**, Bournemouth, (072 762616), **8**. **Reggie**, Ipswich, (0473 281480), **9**. **Field Field**, Llanelli, (081-688 9291), **10**. **Circus Tavern**, Purfleet, (0708 864001), **11**. **Blitz Theatre**, Lincoln, (0522 546313), **12**. **Circle Hall**, Wolverhampton, (0902 312030), **13**. **Barbican Theatre**, York, (0904 656688), **14**. **Empire Theatre**, Sunderland, (091-514 2517), **15**. **Empire Theatre**, Liverpool, (051-709 1555), **16**. **St David's Hall**, Cardiff, (0222 371236), **17**. **Colin Hall**, Bristol, (0272 223698), **18**. **Pavilions**, Plymouth, (0752 229922), **19**. **Hammersmith Odeon**, London, (081-741 4868), **20**. **The Dome**, Doncaster, (0302 370999), **21**. **Hexagon**, Reading, (0734 591591), **22**. **Royal Concert Hall**, Nottingham, (0602 492625), **23**.

THE BATTLE OF WORCESTER: An exhibition, sponsored by The Times, of old war treasures from the Royal Armouries in the Commandery, Charles II's headquarters during the Battle of Worcester, and The City Museum. There are special children's events organised including visits from the King (Charles II), ghosts, and Father Christmas. **The Commandery Civil War Centre**, Salisbury, Wiltshire, (0905 355071), **Mon-Sat**, 10am-5pm, **Sun**, 1.30pm-5.30pm. **The City Museum and Art Gallery**, Foregate Street, Worcester, (0905 25371), **Mon-Wed** and **Fri**, 9.30am-6pm, **Sat**, 9.30am-5pm.

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Happiness is a pig in a potato patch on a wet weekend

FARMER'S DIARY: PAUL HEINEY

Until last weekend I never thought it was possible for a pig to grin. Pigs' moods are easy to determine by listening to their grunts, which will be low and rumbling if in a conversational mood, or high-pitched and piercing if angry. But never in my experience does a pig have a facial expression. However, last Saturday night, I am certain that, for possibly the first time in anthropological history, I saw a pig beam.

It is because we held our annual Potato Picking Weekend, during which we invite the public to follow our horses along the furrows, bending and plucking from the soil succulent, organic spuds. Cuning when, eh? Not only does it save me the trouble of having to pick them up myself, which with a slow, back-breaking and costly business (teams of pickers have to be paid), but it offers an opportunity for those who

have not seen carthorses at work, or plunged their hands into soil, to get stuck in. Children sink to their waists in the mud and compete to find the largest potato. The tiniest just stand and gaze at the Suffolk Punches and, when they have come to terms with this over-powering presence, brave themselves to ask the horses' names.

But the adults are the most entertaining. At any given moment you will see one man with a canoodler in his mind he is remarking *Far From the Madding Crowd*, but in reality he is not even likely to make the Jeremy Beadle show. Then there are the devoted green-minded ones who bend and pick with religious fervour, giving

thanks for the rich smells of the freshly turned soil and handling each picked potato as if it were a miracle in itself. And we will get others who mutter, "My old dad grew taters - he wouldn't think much of these little uns", as they fling aside a cannonball of a spud.

Back in the farmyard, a trusty team of neighbours mans the weighing scales and herds the crowd towards the farm shop. Once there, they have to confront my wife, who, it has to be said, is more at home at her desk than bending over a fence being quizzed about the difference between rolled ribs and topside. But she bravely plays the part of the farmer's wife, only balking at questions such as "Hey, didn't you used to be something or



other - before you worked hard?" Strange how many people get a frozen hunk of brislet dropped on their toes.

So what is there in all this to cause the pigs to grin? The answer

couldn't clear the entire field. I would not bother to pick the potatoes that remained. There is currently a potato glut and prices are so low that it is barely economic to unearth them. But they would not go to waste, for that most efficient of potato-lifters, the pig's snout, would finish the job for me. I would turn pigs on to the field and they could spend from now until Christmas in a nutritional treasure hunt. Word of this plan reached them and, as the storm clouds gathered, the piggies began to grin.

Hoping for better weather than forecast, we prepared for the second day, deciding to offer cups of tea and a traditional Suffolk bun called "fourers". These are a heavy blend of flour, egg, lard and curran, described by my aged recipe book as "filling". It is said that ploughmen took them to the field on harsh winter days. The ones we made were better suited to prop-

ping up the legs of wobbly tables. Imagine scones cast in plaster of Paris and you get the picture. One old woman said: "Mmm, I remember them. Of course, we were poor in those days. We had to eat things like that." Alas, we had made 200. To the credit of our customers, the weather did not deter them. In lashing rain they stood along the furrows, wiping the mud from their hands on the grassy headland, applauding the horses who were having to pull with all their might to get the potato machine through the sodden soil. And as basket after basket was taken from the fields, the pigs grew ever more gloomy as they saw meal by meal disappear into paper sacks. They lined up at the fence and gazed despairingly, as the last ridge was lifted. "Never mind," I cried to the pigs. "It's fourers all round for tea."

Not only can pigs grin, they can snort too!



Beauty in words and pictures: Parsons Norman captured the poppies of Cromer on canvas, while Clement Scott's colourful prose started a tourist boom

Pilgrim to Poppy-Land

Lynne Truss finds heaven in an East Anglian garden immortalised by the writer Clement Scott 100 years ago

Imagine you are a Victorian journalist, the drama critic of *The Daily Telegraph*, visiting the new seaside resort of Cromer in the 1880s. Dressed in appropriate costume - funny hat, Norfolk jacket, pointed stick - you strike out along the high, crumbling cliffs to the southeast on a hot August day, and get slightly carried away by the whole thing. There are poppies abounding, the sky is blue, and the sea sparkles like diamonds. It is fantastic, quite honestly, and extraordinarily quiet.

And then, when you least expect it, you discover a lonely church tower (no church) standing in lolly silence amid graves and poppies, waiting with dignity for the not-too-distant day when it will slide inexorably into the sea. Since you are a man who has been exposed to Ibsen, the symbolism can hardly escape you. Basically, as a journalist in search of colour, you have died and gone to heaven.

It was in this heightened state of nerve-endings, I suspect, that Clement Scott came to eulogise "Poppy-Land" in the columns of *The Daily Telegraph* on August 30, 1883. His piece appeared alongside some exciting sports items, an angry letter about extortionate cab fares, and a short news-flash about a man who set fire to his wife, yet somehow it managed to catch the public imagination and establish an association be-

tween Scott and Poppy-Land which would result eventually in a tourist extravaganza. According to legend, his romantic pieces drove readers wild with curiosity, and the Great Eastern Railway's Cromer service (renamed the Poppy Line, on pretty posters) never looked back. Poppy-Land artefacts hit the shops in quantities.

It is odd, perhaps, to be enthralled by all this a hundred years later, but a good story remains a good story. Scott's romantic evocations of the cliff-top villages of Overstrand and Sidestrand - and his involvement with the miller's daughter, Louise Jermy, with whom he lodged - seemed to me, when I first read about them this summer, fantastic material for a play for television or something. I felt that I, too, had died and gone to heaven.

Such last-gasp dying-fall poignancy suffuses the story. The young woman (19 when Scott first stayed at the Mill House) is exposed to Scott's high-society theatrical friends, only to be dumped later when the century closes. Scott dies and Poppy-Land fades in the public's imagination. Later, the tower crashes into the sea, as does the woman's house! What a third-act climax! As I dashed to Cromer



Poetic Clement Scott

down poppy-lined lanes, I felt I was really on to something. And I was. The only trouble was that the TV play (with the giveaway title *Poppyland*) was written and broadcast seven years ago, with Alan Howard starring as Scott. I discovered this at the Cromer Museum, where a nice curator told me it had been a good play, too, covering every aspect of the story very well. Heigh-ho, I said, pretending not to care. But the point of all this is that I still kept telling people about Poppy-Land afterwards, and reading their bits of Clement Scott's popular poem *The Garden of Sleep*, even as does the woman's house! Here is a longish bit, to get the flavour:

On the grass of the cliff, at the edge of the steep,
God planted a garden - a garden of sleep!
Neath the blue of the sky, in the green of the corn,
It is there that the regal red poppies are born!
Brief days of desire, and long dreams of delight,
They are mine when my Poppy-Land cometh in sight.
In music of distance, with eyes that are wet,
It is there I remember, and there I forget!
Of heart of my heart! where the poppies are born,
I am waiting for thee, in the hush of the corn.

Sleep! Sleep! From the Cliff to the Deep! Sleep, my Poppy-Land, Sleep!

This is the sort of stuff you either love or hate, I suppose. And in the end one of my friends, Christine Stockwell, decided that she loved it enough to re-publish Clement Scott's long unobtainable *Poppy-Land Papers*, in a facsimile edition. It came out this week, and I hasten to say that Scott's prose was rather better than his verse (or not so repetitive, anyway). Though he has been revivified in theatrical history for his obstinate dislike of Ibsen (phrases such as "an open drain" and "a lunatic's sore unbandaged" give the

strength of feeling), he was nevertheless a very readable critic with clear ideas. Even his comments on Ibsen seem pretty good sometimes, especially when he advises the author of *Pillars of Society* to "cut the cackle and come to the 'osser'".

For the present-day pilgrim on the trail of Poppy-Land, there is not much left to see, unfortunately. Not only has the tower gone (it fell off the cliff in 1916, unremarked), but so, of course, has the ground it stood on. The windmill has gone, too; and the little seat erected somewhere on the B1159 in memory of Louise Jermy evaded all my plucky attempts to find it.

The Mill House has not changed much from when Scott brought his famous friends down from London - Swinburne, Henry Irving - but there is no name on the gate, so it is hard to identify. But something does still remain of the garden of sleep - the poppies. Excuse me while I wipe a tear, but they were breathtaking. "All these poppies," I asked, "is this unusual?" People said it might be because farmers use fewer chemicals, or perhaps it is the influence of sea-spray, but there were definitely more poppies around this year. Talk about died and gone to heaven.

Christine Stockwell's facsimile edition of *Poppy-Land Papers* (£8.95) is available from her at 4 Reform Place, Stagsfoot, Lincs. NG34 7QK, and from certain East Anglian bookshops.

Feather report

Winter wonderbirds

THE fields often look bleak and bare in winter. Perhaps a cartoon crow will drift across, with a confident, languid flap of its wings - and almost always a moment later, its mate will appear. A skylark flies up from the green rows of winter wheat with a brisk, musical call. Two or three woodpeckers follow it with an air of panic, and head for the woods. Then all is silence and stillness again.

But it is not yet time for the birdwatcher to turn home. In a hedge, there is a flurry of wings. A flock of small birds is moving further along the line of hawthorns and sloes. Move quietly after them and you are likely to find four or five species of finch or bunting in this party of foragers.

If there are any yellowhammers, they will be the most conspicuous. They flick their tails on the topmost twigs of the hedge, yellow heads almost as brilliant as in spring. There will be, almost certainly, plenty of greenfinches, hidden deeper in the bushes but just as vivid with their olive-green bodies and gold wing bars. They are the noisiest members of the flock, making a loud, staccato twitter as they sweep away. Early in the winter they are found in, particularly, hedgerow hornbeams, where they tear the seeds, which look like little Chinese lanterns, from the twigs.

A bird that can be puzzling at first is one that looks like a long-tailed sparrow. It is a reed bunting in its winter plumage. In the autumn, it leaves the lake edges, where it nests, for the fields and farmyards. The males keep only a trace of their striking black and white head-pattern, but you can see that they still have rich and intricate markings of black and brown and cream on their backs, like an exquisite rug.



Noisy: the greenfinch

A more liquid, tinkling kind of twitter tells you there are goldfinches nearby. They are more likely to be feeding on weeds at the foot of the hedge. When they fly up, they seem to dance through the sky. The males are unmistakable, their heads barred with red, white and black. Both sexes have gold and black wing bars. They keep more to themselves than the other birds, and if the winter turns hard, they move off to France and Spain. There are, however, still large numbers around at the moment.

Chaffinches like the edges of woodlands, where they keep up a constant traffic between the ground and the trees, white-barred wings rising and descending. In the south, there are usually more olive-brown females than the pink-breasted males, as many of these birds are immigrants from the north and the fe-

males seek a warmer climate. Persist in your walk, and you may come across many more scattered parties of birds out in the open fields. Rooks will choose one field out of the hundreds within range of their roost and stay there all day, turning up leatherjackets, the tough-skinned, destructive larvae of the daddy-long-legs. Rooks are popular with farmers at this season. With them there may be lapwings: these like the brow of a rolling field, their crested heads silhouetted against the sky. Otherwise, they are often hard to detect on the ground, their dark bodies blending with the earth. But when they take to the air the field breaks into a wave of black and white as they flop away on strange, rounded wings.

Dusk is the time to find the partridges. These are among the most conservative of birds, often spending their whole lives in two or three fields. As evening comes on, they become more vocal, their sharp, metallic cries audible from far away. They scuffle across the ploughland, or dive down into a valley with a long glide. At night, the rooks will be asleep in thick woods, the finches and buntings in the densest hedges or in reed beds. But the partridges will still be out in the fields, each small covey roosting in a circle, facing outwards, some of them always awake and on the look-out for a prowling fox as the night winds blow.

DERWENT MAY

What's about: Birds - Gold-eye ducks are returning to coastal estuaries and inland waters. Twitchees - White-rumped sandpipers in Dublin; Pillars warblers in Orkney and Sussex; red-breasted geese still at Caerlaverock, Shetland. Details from Birdline, 0898 700222.

The Times Johansens exclusive Privilege Card offer

Save on a special weekend away

Over the past two weeks we have published a list of more than 200 hotels which are participating in The Times Johansens Privilege Card offer. Today, we feature another five

hotels, who are offering readers of The Times a 25 per cent discount on a double room rate with full English breakfast, plus further privileges worth up to £50.

Tasting wine

The Malvern hills - once the home and inspiration for Sir Edward Elgar - are the setting for The Cottage in the Wood Hotel. The hotel occupies seven acres of thickly wooded grounds, perched high on the hillsides, with views across the Severn. Valley guests can walk up from the grounds up the Malverns. An English menu is complemented by an adventurous wine cellar. The Victorian spa town of Great Malvern and the cathedral cities of Gloucester and Worcester are nearby.



To be taken literally: The Cottage in the Wood Hotel

Take time to enjoy yourself, have a break

The Cottage in the Wood Hotel, Holywell Road, Malvern Wells, Worcestershire, WR14 4LG. (0684 573487).

Usual rate: £89.00. Offer rate: £66.75. Average dinner: £23.00. Offer not available Christmas, New Year or Easter.

The Three Choirs vineyard close to the hotel is one of the most famous English vineyards. The hotel offers a bottle of wine on arrival, self-drive visit to the vineyard where complimentary lunch or tea, wine-tasting and a tour of the vineyard are available.

Deer Head Hall Lakeside Hotel, Thirlmere, Keswick CA12 4TD. (07687 72478).

Usual rate: £73.00. Offer rate: £54.75. Average dinner: £15.50. Offer not available

Christmas, New Year and Easter. Dinner to be taken on all nights of stay. Meals are prepared with fresh produce from the walled garden. The hotel offers an upgrade to a four poster suite and free hire of walking boots from George Fisher's Outdoor Leisure Shop.

Michael's Nook Country House Hotel, Grasmere, Ambleside, Cumbria, LA23 9RP. (05394 35496).

Usual rate: £108.00. Offer rate: £80.00. Average dinner: £38.00. Not available over bank holidays. Dinner to be taken on each night of the stay. The hotel offers two free rounds of golf on a championship course, a bottle of champagne, fresh fruit and flowers in room and a welcome pot of tea on arrival.

The Swan Diplomat, Strathgipon, Strathgipon, Berkeby RG8 9HR. (0491 873737).

Usual rate: £131.00. Offer rate: £98.25. Average dinner: £23.00. Not available 24-27, 31, December.

The hotel offers two bottles of award winning Chiltern Valley wines, a guided tour of the vineyard followed by a tasting.

Wordsworth Hotel, Grasmere, Cumbria LA22 9SW. (05394 35592).

Usual rate: £116.00. Offer rate: £87.00. Average dinner: £29.50. Dinner to be taken on each night of stay. Not available Christmas, New Year or Bank Holidays.

The hotel offers a bottle of champagne and chocolates or a free round of golf or Bucks Fizz up a local mountain.

Lunching with lions

BUSH TELEGRAPH
Simon Barnes

There are times when you feel you are walking through an English park. If you get up at five o'clock in the morning you can stroll through sun-dappled glades in an African cool.

The trees have a tended look, like those in Richmond Park, and for the same reason. Deer - or antelope over here - eat the leaves and establish a neat, straight browse line across both Richmond Park and the Luangwa valley.

You listen to the pleasant song of robin - Meughina's robin, to be sure - and admire the silly goat-call of the beating bush warbler. All very calm, very peaceful.

And then, of course, a dozen elephants come out of the bush. That rather alters things. But our walks here are taken in the un-English company of Perry Nyama, the scout at Mchenja. His job is to carry a battered rifle and to be cool in the bush.

The other day, Perry and I walked up to a pride of lions.

Such moments tend to drive the beating bush warblers out of your mind.

Shall I boast about all the ghastly dangers I am facing daily? Certainly, every walk you take could lead to trouble, that is why you must walk in Luangwa with a watchful scout like Perry.

Hippies are said to be the most dangerous beasts: an alarmed hippo will make for water and safety, and will go clean through anything and anyone in its path.

Old male buffaloes have an equally tough reputation. These are animals with a grudge against the world. They have been kicked out of the herd by younger bulls and live out their half-lives in a state of permanent sulks.

There is a real temptation to elaborate on the perils of the bush. Well, it is not sensible to make light of them, but that

principle holds well for the M25. The dangers exist, but that is not the point. It is not in the main, a frightening experience. It is an immense pleasure.

You can get better views of lions from a vehicle. But to see them while you are on foot is one of the most colossal, uncompromisingly vivid experiences life can offer. Is it the sense of danger? I think not. I think it has something to do with the exchange of ideas.

In a vehicle, you are a noisy, smelly, meaningless intrusion, and lions mostly ignore you. On foot, the lions recognise

you as mammal to mammal. A pretty obvious mammal, too. One capable of killing at long range, for no reason that makes sense to a lion, or to me for that matter.

But within the boundaries of the park, between humans and lions there exists something akin to trust.

Perry and I got within about 60 yards of our pride that day. The lions were well aware of us. Relaxed, in the bliss of leonine digestion, they watched us and they tolerated us. We were at the optimum distance: Perry judged it to be a nifty. To have gone any closer would have been an act of provocation; one more likely to induce fight than flight.

Perhaps trust is too strange a word. Certainly, at the very least, it was an armed neutrality. Both sides were prepared to tolerate each other closer than was quite wise. And both

sides had fearsome weapons, should things deteriorate. They did not. Perry is, as I say, cool in the bush, and so are lions. We sat, they sat. They watched, we watched.

After a long while - the air full of the sound of crunching bones, the odd snarl and scuffle - we withdrew. We did so with infinite tact at a suitably glancing angle, using such cover as we found. And the lions just watched us go: eight immense, tawny beasts looting at their wild ease in their own wild place.

Afterwards, I could hardly speak for the wonder of it, and the wonder had nothing to do with danger. It was a matter of awe: privilege that such beasts still exist; that they permit such proximity; that, mammal to mammal, there is a time and a place where lions and humans can lower their guards for a while.

Simon Barnes is staying in Swansh Thais, Luangwa National Park, Zambia.

Fiona Beckett visits a free-range farm with room for a gaggle — but even the nicest bird must meet its Christmas-dinner destiny



A tiresome flock: apart from their notorious aggressiveness (worse with age), their nerves and neuroses, when the church bells ring in Croxton Kerrial the geese "get in a total panic and run round in circles", Mrs Botterill says

Motorists passing through the sleepy Leicestershire village of Croxton Kerrial at eight in the morning are likely to pull up short at a startling sight: a flock of 200 geese descending the hill to their daytime pasture.

Four abreast, heads poked forward, they march in step, gabbling noisily like a crocodile of delinquent schoolchildren. Then, once through the gate, they start running and soar joyously over the field, glad to be let loose for the day.

It's a sight that has attracted amateur photographers from all over the area and even found its way on to a county council poster promoting the delights of rural Leicestershire. In fact, the geese are a strictly commercial proposition, destined for Christmas dinner tables.

Gerald and Ann Botterill started keeping geese four years ago on their mainly arable farm. "We found we had surplus grain and we didn't have anything that could eat

it," Mr Botterill says. "We thought of poultry but we didn't want to be committed to anything right the year round. Geese seemed to fit the bill perfectly."

The Botterills buy day-old chicks in May and June, keep them in for four to six weeks, then put them out to grass daily through the summer and autumn, supplementing their diet with their own wheat and oats. It's a free-range operation, an article of faith with Mr Botterill, who believes in doing things the traditional way. "There are no antibiotics or additives in our geese at all. You don't want all that stuff going through your body. I want to produce something that's safe for people to eat."

But keeping geese on the dietary straight and narrow is far from easy. Geese peck at anything that's

put in front of them, from windfall apples to bits of wood. "When we open up the gizzard we often find stones, bits of wire and all kinds of rubbish," Mrs Botterill says.

They're a tiresome lot, geese, more tricky than turkeys (of which the Botterills also have a large flock). Apart from their notorious aggressiveness — worse as they get older — they are apt to be nervous and neurotic.

The Botterills' geese have developed a pathological hatred for the local church bells. "They get in a total panic and run round in circles," Mrs Botterill says. "We've had to ask the church to let us know when they're going to be ringing the bells so we can keep them in."

Troublesome they may be, but geese are in growing demand. Last year the Botterills had more orders

than they could cope with. This year they have increased the size of the flock to 800, despite the general climate of puritanism about the consumption of fat.

Duck, she says, is a worse culprit. "If you're looking at the ratio of fat to meat, a duck has twice as much fat as a goose in relation to its weight," Mrs Botterill says. "We make sure they don't get too fat. You can tell by the way a goose walks if it's putting on too much weight. Its bottom gets heavier and drops down at the back. We cut down the feed and put a bale of straw out for them and they peck away quite happily at that."

From October to early December, when the Christmas rush begins, the Botterills' geese are

popular for dinner parties, boned and stuffed with chicken and game birds such as pheasant, partridge and quail. Mrs Botterill, who went on a specialist boning course, offers a three or five-bird roast. She regards three as ideal. "Chicken and pheasant are perfect. They absorb all the juices and you can taste each different flavour."

For preference she serves goose with a sharp gooseberry or apple sauce, or a strong-flavoured vegetable such as red cabbage. "You have to be careful not to overdo it. You don't want to taste the accompaniment and not the meat. We give away recipe leaflets for people who need advice."

The geese destined for the Christmas table are killed around December 5, plucked and then hung for ten days to a fortnight in chilled

cabinets until they are ready for final preparation and dispatch.

At £2.30 a pound (£2.40 during December) for an oven-ready bird they don't come cheap, but the Botterills point out that free-range birds take longer to mature and are properly hung for maximum tenderness and flavour.

As an alternative to a traditional roast, Mrs Botterill suggests a Swedish recipe:

Marinated goose	
(serves 8-10)	
10-12lb oven-ready goose	
6pt (3½) cold water	
1lb (450g) salt	
4½oz (125g) caster sugar	
8-10 whole peppercorns	
3-4 bay leaves	
3 sliced onions	

Mix the salt and sugar with the water and marinate the goose for three days. Don't use a metal container or the salt will stain.

When you are ready to cook the goose, remove it from the marinade and dry it. Put the bird in a large pan and cover with water. Bring the water to the boil, skim and add peppercorns, bay leaves and sliced onions. Cook slowly until tender. Leave the bird to cool in the liquid before carving.

A traditional accompaniment is apple purée mixed with some light mayonnaise and whipped cream flavoured with freshly grated horseradish.

© G.E. Geese, Lings View Farm, 10 Middle Street, Croxton Kerrial, Grantham, Leicestershire NG32 1QP (0476 870394). Geese can either be collected or sent mail-order. Because supplies are limited, Christmas orders should be placed as soon as possible. (The Botterills point out that as the minimum cost of mail order is £11.50, customers can save money by combining orders with friends.)

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Trotting out facts about ham

The series that lifts the lid on what we eat, for better or worse: this week, one of our favourite meats



Ham is older than Christianity. The Gauls exported it to Rome and there is an Italian recipe from the 2nd century BC for cooking it. You stew your ham with dried figs, then bake it in a crust of flour and olive oil.

I don't know anyone who has tried ham BC-style, but it sounds rather good. The Romans made a clear distinction between true ham (*perna*) and shoulder bacon (*petaso*), and the distinction is still important.

The ham is the top half of the back leg of the pig. Cured, which means preserved, in various ways, it becomes the familiar pink, salty meat we know and love, unless we happen to be Jewish or Muslim.

The pink colour comes traditionally from adding to the cure saltpetre, or potassium nitrate. This kills bacteria which would spoil the ham, including those of botulism, which would spoil you, perhaps permanently. The nitrate reacts with pigment in pork meat to give the pink for safety signal. These days different forms of nitrates and nitrites are often used in curing ham. (For anyone without O-level chemistry, nitrates and nitrites are respectively the salts of nitrous and nitric acid. In food, you can think of the two forms as the same thing, for the body converts nitrates to nitrites anyway.)

Nitrate became a dirty diet word in 1965 when it was shown that in highest doses they could cause cancer in animals. But the quantities that can legally be used in ham are minute — 200 parts per million — and when you consider that the old ham cures were tossed in saltpetre by the handful, you will see that you would need to eat a couple of hams a day to be in much danger.

The current, conservatively stated medical view is that in ham the nitrate/nitrite danger is small and, anyway, has to be set against the danger of botulism without it.

Dr Sheila Bingham, of the Medical Research Council's Dunn Nutrition Unit in Cambridge, says: "The general view is that nitrate in processed food products gives only a low-level risk of cancer to the consumer."

The other additives you will sometimes see listed if you buy ham ready-sliced in supermarket packets are polyphosphates or tri-phosphates.

These are added to ham to help it to retain water. Water is cheaper than pig meat and persuading you to buy it as ham is good news for the processor.

However, there seems to be no evidence that polyphosphates can hurt you in small quantities and, as an executive of one of our big supermarket chains sadly explained to me: "The British public seems to prefer damp ham."

If ham contains up to 10 per cent of water there is no need to declare the fact; above that and the people must be told. A typical label on packeted ham will read: "Contains not more than 20 per cent water."

Timed ham often contains another ingredient, gelatine, which means the ham content can fall to 70 per cent. Read the small print, unless you enjoy jellied ham.

The run-up to Christmas is the time Britain buys whole hams or half-hams or joints of bone-in ham.

Fortnum & Mason sells hundreds of the cured porky thighs through the post at

Christmas, but only in Britain. Every year experts write to ask if Mr Fortnum and Mr Mason can see their way clear to posting them a genuine York ham for Christmas, and every year they are disappointed. "Food regulations in almost every country forbid it," a Fortnum's spokesman says.

The original reason for making ham was simple: to preserve the meat through the winter in pre-fridge days. What happened was that the preservatives, salt and saltpetre, plus all manner of secret local additions, gave us a taste for the finished product.

There are two basic ways to cure ham: wet and dry. The first involves immersing the ham in a vat of brine and any number of extra pickling ingredients, for days or weeks.

The ham is then dried, sometimes smoked, and left to mature, sometimes for six months or more. In the dry process the salt and other preservatives are rubbed in by hand.

The best-known English ham is the York, a dry-cure ham that is Fortnum's biggest seller — even at £78 a ham — but it is not to everyone's taste. The meat is dryish and, for some people, too salty.

The Wiltshire is a milder, milder ham, brine-cured. The

Alderton is basically a Wiltshire with a marmalade coating to give it a sweet and sour touch. The Bradenham has a distinctive herby taste.

You can always follow Royal taste and go for an Emment ham. Emment's Stores, the village grocery shop in Peasenhall, Suffolk, has the Queen Mother's warrant for its hams.

Nigel and Barbara Jerrey, kinfolk of the Emments who opened the shop, must have one of the most successful cottage industries in Britain. They offer their hams through the year but at Christmas demand rises dramatically and they sell at least a thousand.

Their pickle is a secret recipe, but there are two basic styles, one based on Guinness and treacle, the other on cider and treacle. The hams — about 14-16lb in weight — are smoked over oak chippings in two smokehouses.

The hams cost £2.80 a pound, plus a small extra charge if you want them cooked. Children do not always like the rich, ripe taste of an Emment ham, so they produce a milder (oak-smoked but no booze) version for £1.80 a pound. (Details from Emment's Stores, Peasenhall, Saxmundham, IP17 2HU.)

For the politically and culinarily correct, there are quite delicious hams to be had from the Real Meat Company of Warrminster. Their farm animals are not intensively reared, or given food additives. The pigs all come from Chippingham in Wiltshire, where they live longer than your average pig ("they take 20 per cent longer to grow," says the company).

They are slaughtered in a nearby abattoir and the hams are cured locally by traditional methods. Two styles are available: green (very apt) and smoked. (Details from the Real Meat Company, Heyesbury, Warrminster, Wiltshire BA12 0HR.)

The supermarkets sell traditional bone-in ham joints at Christmas, too. Sainsbury's will be offering various styles, including York ham matured for a full six months. In some stores these may have to be ordered.

FRANK JEFFERY

Homely meals Eastern style

Frances Bissell, the Times cook, is taking a true taste of Britain to Bangkok. Here are some of her favourite recipes



I SHALL follow a food route of my own next month, taking British produce and recipes to Thailand, where I have been invited to be guest cook at the Dusit Thani hotel in Bangkok. On my return, I expect I shall be cooking with herbs and spices, Thai fashion.

Thailand, its cooking never having been colonised, reflects less outside influence than many other cuisines, with one notable exception: the chillies, which have been introduced into most of the world's kitchens. Thai peppers are among the hottest, particularly the tiny bird peppers, red and green. What a contrast they make to the pale, subdued northern flavours that I shall be using in my cooking in Bangkok: nothing hotter than a mild touch of horseradish or mustard.

Blue Stilton and pickled herrings will be the strongest flavours. Cider and cider vinegar will be my cooking medium; no fermented fish sauce. Parsley, chives and chervil will be my herbs, with a hint of rosemary and sage in some of the roasts. Basil, coriander and lemon grass will be left to one side for when I go for some Thai cooking lessons in the kitchens of the Benjarong hotel.

I have agreed with Jacques Lafargue, the executive chef at the Dusit Thani, to avoid any hints of "east meets west" in my cooking in favour of a true taste of Britain. Will the brie, honey and saffron tart pass his scrutiny, I wonder? It should, for a soft brie-type cheese was made in England in Norman times, and today's recipe is based on a dish described in our oldest cookery book, the 14th-century *Forme of Cury*.

Other dishes I plan to cook reflect the influence on English cooking of the cargoes brought back along the spice routes from the east: our use of ginger, cinnamon and nutmeg has a long history.

I have chosen a few of my favourite recipes for today, as they seem entirely appropriate for a weekend lunch or dinner. And I had to include the pickled. Nothing could be more seasonal. It was a staple in my parents' household around November 5.

Cream of potato, onion and lovage soup

(serves 6)
1 large onion, peeled and sliced
1 or 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed
1oz/30g unsalted butter
1lb/455g potatoes
lovage leaves - if these are not available, use celery leaves and leaves
2pt/1.15l water or stock
1/4pt/140ml single cream
seasoning
garnish: lovage leaves

Cook the onion and garlic in butter until soft. Peel and dice the potatoes. Add to the onion and garlic, but do not brown. Add the lovage leaves and stock. Strain until vegetables are soft. Blend and sieve. Stir in cream and season to taste. Bring back to the boil and serve hot. In warmer weather, this soup is very good served chilled.

Scallops with cumin, mint and honey dressing

(serves 6)
salad leaves, washed and dried
12-18 scallops
1/2tsp/2g sea salt
1 clove garlic, peeled and chopped
1tsp/5g ground cumin
4oz/110g fresh mint leaves, finely chopped
1tbsp/15ml clear honey
2tbsp/30ml cider vinegar
4tbsp/60ml extra virgin olive oil
freshly ground black pepper

Arrange the salad leaves in a bowl, on a platter or on individual plates, according to how you wish to serve the dish. Then poach, steam, grill or pan-fry the scallops and put to one side while you quickly make the accompanying dressing. Grind

the salt and garlic to a paste, and then add the other ingredients, one at a time, making sure that each one is thoroughly blended before adding the next. The garlic can be left out if preferred.

Arrange the scallops on the salad leaves. Spoon the dressing over the top, and serve immediately. Serve with beetroot crisps for garnish if you like. These are made by thinly slicing raw beetroot, drying thoroughly on paper towels and deep-frying in a neutral vegetable oil, such as groundnut or sunflower, heated to 180C/350F. The crisps cook very quickly and should be drained thoroughly on paper towels before serving.

Rack of lamb with three mustards

(serves 2: not many roasts are suitable for only two people, but the best end of lamb is ideal, with 6 or 7 small cutlets)
1 best end of lamb, chine bone removed
2 cloves garlic
1tbsp Dijon mustard
1tbsp tarragon mustard
1tbsp grain mustard, such as Moutarde de Meunier or one of the English versions
1tbsp chopped tarragon
salt, pepper
juice of half a lemon
1tbsp olive oil
1oz/30g fine breadcrumbs

If the butcher has not already done so, trim the ribs down to the thick, meaty fillet and remove the outer layer of fat. When carved, this will give an "eye" of meat on each trimmed bone, and very little fat.

With the exception of the breadcrumbs, mix the rest of the ingredients and spread all over the surface of the meat. You can then leave it to marinate overnight or cook immediately, as you prefer. Make sure the meat is at room temperature before you cook it, which you should do in a preheated oven set at 200C/400F, gas mark 6, for 20 minutes. After 10 minutes, sprinkle the meat with breadcrumbs, and press them in lightly. Return the meat to the oven. When done, allow it to rest in a warm place for 15 minutes before carving. This will allow the juices to redistribute through the meat.

Cheese, honey and saffron tart

(serves 4-6)
pinch of saffron threads
8oz/250g short pastry



4oz/110g curd cheese
4oz/110g mild brie or similar cheese
3tbsp honey
3tbsp water
2 size 3 eggs

Soak saffron threads for 20 minutes in a tablespoon of hot water. Roll out pastry and line a 10in/25cm rimmed pie plate. Use trimmings to decorate rim with pastry leaves or a plait. Put curd

cheese in a bowl, remove rind from the brie and mix thoroughly with the curd cheese. Melt honey with two tablespoons water. Mix honey and saffron liquid with cheese and beat in the two eggs. Pour mixture carefully into the pie dish and bake in a preheated oven at 190C/375F, gas mark 5, for 15 minutes, then turn it down to 170C/325F, gas mark 3, for a further 20 minutes or so. Serve warm or cold.

The traditional dish for making a Bakewell pudding, by which name it is correctly called rather than tart, was an oval tin about 2in deep and 6in long. From the recipe and its appearance it is easy to see why it is often described as a tart.

Bakewell pudding
(serves 4-6)
1/2lb/230g plain or sweet short pastry
apricot or raspberry jam

1/2lb/110g castor sugar
4 free-range eggs
1/2lb/110g unsalted butter, melted
1oz/30g plain flour, sifted
3oz/85g ground almonds
lemon juice

Line a 9in/22cm tart tin with the pastry and spread it with a generous layer of jam. Whisk the sugar and eggs in a bowl set over hot water until thick and pale. Mix in the melted butter, then fold in flour and almonds. Add lemon juice to taste. Spread the mixture evenly over the jam. Bake in a preheated oven at 180C/350F, gas mark 4, until set, about 35 minutes.

Parkin
(makes a 2lb loaf)
1lb/455g plain flour
1tbsp baking powder
pinch of salt
1/2lb/230g butter, lard or margarine, or a mixture
1lb/455g fine or medium oatmeal
1lb/455g golden syrup
6oz/170g black treacle or molasses sugar
4tbsp milk
1 free-range egg

Grease a roasting tin or square cake tin, about 10in by 10in/25cm by 25cm or equivalent, line with greaseproof paper and lightly grease the paper.

Sift the first three ingredients together, and then rub in the fat. Stir in the oatmeal. Put the golden syrup, black treacle or molasses and milk in a saucepan and heat gently until melted. Mix in the dry ingredients and lastly add the egg. The batter should be thoroughly mixed and of a thick pouring consistency. Add some more warm milk if you feel it necessary.

Pour the mixture into the prepared tin, and bake for about an hour in the middle of a preheated oven at 180C/350F, gas mark 4. When done, the cake will shrink slightly from the edges. Allow to cool in the tin. Remove the lining paper, wrap in greaseproof and foil, and ideally keep for a week before eating.

DIARY DATES

● November 12-15: Cooking and Kitchen Show, sponsored by BBC Good Food, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. £7 at door, £5.50 booked in advance through the ticket hotline on 021-780 4133.

● November 16-21: Frances Bissell will be cooking lunch and dinner in the Tiers restaurant of the Dusit Thani Hotel in Bangkok. Her afternoon tea specialties will be served in the lobby and the library.

● November 18: Antonia Moxham gives a 1 1/2-hour cookery demonstration at the Kensington Hilton, west London, to raise money for Victims Support Kensington and Chelsea. Tickets, including reception, £30 (£50 for two) from Room F, 1 Thorpe Close, London W10 5XL. For further information, contact Shelley-Anne Chaintreuil (071-433 0903) or Marie-Pierre Moine (071-727 8641).

Plonk for a good, cheap wine

Prices are falling and quality is rising, reports Jane MacQuitty

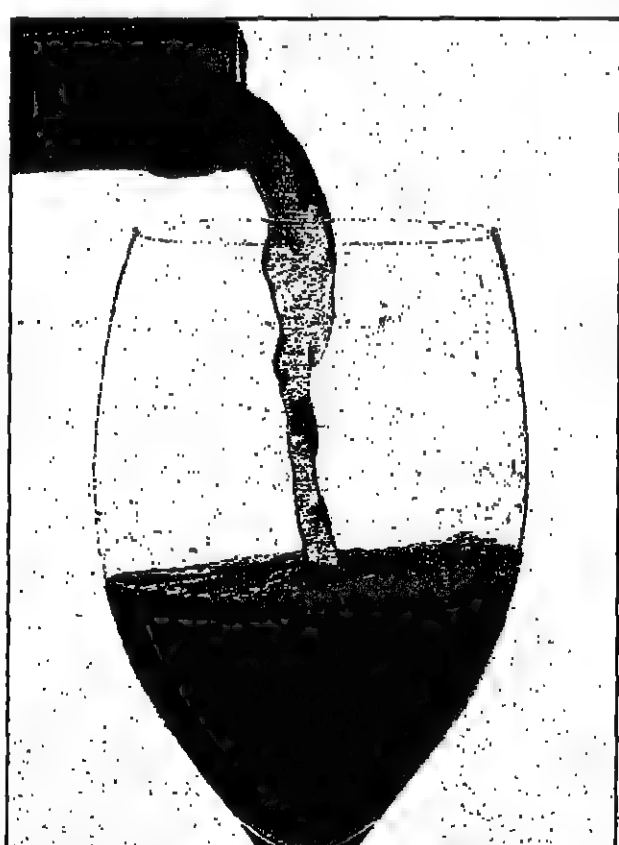
YOU have only £2.99 to spend on a bottle of wine? Relax, you are in good company. Seventy per cent of all bottles of wine sold in Britain cost £3 or under, and half of these sales are in the £2.50 or less category. Traditional wine traders will have to be reminded that only 3 per cent of this country's wine sales are on bottles costing more than £4.

Although snobs and wine shop specialists would have us believe otherwise, the recession has pared wine prices to the bone, and it is possible to drink well and widely at the £2.99 and below level. As my tasting this week effortlessly proved, the flood of decent £2.99 bottles shows no signs of abating. And it is the sensible, not snooty, wine drinkers who have been enjoying this recession bonanza.

Quite how the wine trade keeps the £2.99 and, particularly, the £1.99 bottles going is a mystery. With duty on table wine up to 95p a bottle, plus another 30p or so of VAT on even the cheapest wine, it is hard to see where the retailers' mark-up and actual cost of the wine fits in - even harder if you take into account the other fixed costs of bottling, labelling, corking and capping, shipping and distribution, which must total at least another 50p.

Tesco and other retailers admit they do not make money out of the £1.99 bottles: "We are keeping them going at our own expense," Tesco says.

Wine traders are doing their



Glass of good cheer: even £1.99 wines are worth drinking

best to wring every ounce of value for customers out of their £3 and below bottles. Marks & Spencer is now using plastic corks on its cheaper wines in an attempt to shave a few more pennies off the price.

Similarly, Safeway is this autumn shipping New World wines in bulk from areas such as California and Australia to France for bottling there, before importing these wines to the UK. As a result, Safeway cuts out several middle men and can offer a reasonable, soft, apply Australian white, albeit in a fruit juice-style Tetrapak, for as little as £2.59. Tesco has a similar scheme

with its International Wine-maker range, the brainchild of Tesco and Bordeaux Jacques Lurton, who travels the world overseeing production.

As some wine traders strive to deliver quality at these rock-bottom prices, their greatest price war is beginning - not so much with each other, but in the face of the currency crisis. Sterling's effective devaluation against the French franc and the German mark is likely to hit the £2.99 drinker. Much of Britain's good, ordinary drinking comes from these two countries. Wine drinkers may eventually have to pay 10p more on cheaper

wines, about 20p on the better *appellation contrôlée* wines, and as much as £1 on a bottle of own-label champagne. Top wines such as Krug's Grande Cuvée champagne could face a £4 increase. But my hunch is that prices will not rise steeply until after Christmas.

Tesco offers 148 different wines priced at £2.99 and below. Sainsbury's has 49. Finding the best £2.99 wine buys in the high street (see below) has never been easier. Patriots will be delighted to learn that for the first time ever a truly flavoured English wine is available at £2.99. The '91 Willow Court made by Three Choirs in Gloucestershire, from Victoria Wine, has an elegant, light, floral, citrusy style, which stems mostly from a hardy hybrid seyval blanc, and madeleine angevine blend, but with the aromatic huxelrebe and reichester also in the mix.

The cheaper New World wines worth trying include Safeway's zesty lime and lemon-scented Californian White (£2.85), its spicy, lemony Semillon from New South Wales (£2.85) and its soft, plum and cherry-layered Californian Red (£2.85). Tesco's Jacques Lurton '92 Mendoza Blanc from Argentina, with a 13 per cent alcohol volume (£2.99), and Oddbins' Californian '90 Monterey Vineyard Pinot Noir with a juicy, gamey, liquorish finish (£2.99). From Europe try Davison's Pampette red, and white with a marzipan bouquet, (£2.89); Marks & Spencer's St Michael '92 Vin de Pays des Pyrénées Orientales (£2.99); and Oddbins' fresh, smoky-apple '91 Castillo de Olite white from Navarra (£2.99), or the tempranillo fruit of the fine '91 Vega de Moriz red from Valdepeñas (£2.69).

Best buys

street, with lashings of juicy, spicy, blackcurrant fruit.

● Bulgarian Country Wine Sliven Merlot and Pinot Noir, Gateway, Somerset and Safeway £2.59, Watrose £2.65, Thresher £2.89.

Rich plum and damson fruit make this the best cheap Bulgarian red on offer.

● Bulgarian Country Wine, Pavlovci, Cabernet Sauvignon and Merlot, Asda £2.45, Victoria Wine £2.75, Thresher Wine Rack £2.89.

More musky, herbaceous and blackcurrant than the wine above, and a shade less fine, but still great value.

● 1985 Romania Dealul Mare Special Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon, Safeway £2.99.

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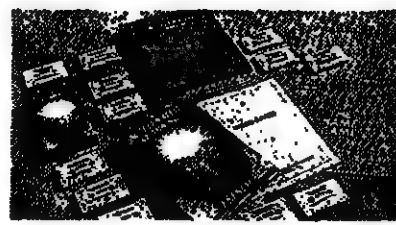
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● Randall Bridge, Penfolds The Victoria Wine Company, £2.99 The best cheap Australian white wine available. Deep, buttery, spicy semillon scent and taste with wide appeal.
● Ryan's Creek, South Eastern Australia Shiraz-Cabernet Victoria Wine, £2.99 Victoria Wine is moving upwards and upwards. Again, the company offers the best, cut-price Aussie red in the high



Going out tonight?
Perhaps it might be
safer if you take
some bread and
salt with you, says
Kay Marles

Hallowe'en: it might be the remnant of a pagan feast of the dead or the night when the spirits of the dead are allowed one last fling before winter sets in. Whatever you believe, the last pagan festival of the year is awash with superstitions and old customs.

As one of the biggest dates in the witchcraft calendar, it's a night of high activity for witches and warlocks, whether as spirits in the air or the children heading off to a ghostly party.

Anyone with the slightest belief in black magic does not venture out after dark on Hallowe'en. All journeys should be completed by sunset. But if you must travel there are certain items you can carry with you to ward off the malevolent spirits: for example, a piece of bread crossed with salt — "holy" bread was once treated with "witch-repellent" salt — is a safe pocketful for the traveller, as is a rowan cross, rowan being regarded as the best wood for protection against black magic.

In Ireland, the horror of evil spirits abroad is so strong that it is said that if you hear footsteps behind you, you should never look round, for it is one of the dead following you, and if you turn and see the spectre, you will soon join them.

But Hallowe'en is not just about bad things: it is about good too. Love lore is a vital part of the traditions. Most are linked to apples and nuts, the benevolent, wholesome fruits of the earth said to have powers to fend off evil.

LOVE SUPERSTITIONS

This is what a girl should do if she wants to know the identity of her future Mr Right: stand in front of a mirror on Hallowe'en, eat an apple and the face of the man she is to marry will appear in the glass. It is also said that if an apple is peeled carefully without breaking the skin, and the peel is then thrown over the shoulder, it will take the form of the initial letter of the future mate.

Intrepid young women can creep into the garden at midnight and pluck 12 sage leaves. At this moment, the shadowy figure of the husband-to-be is said to approach from the other side of the garden. To determine their future, cou-



Party spirit: witches and warlocks may be abroad tonight, but in homes all over Britain children in Hallowe'en fancy dress will be having a frighteningly good time

ples should place two nuts side by side in the fire: if they burn steadily to ashes without moving, their future together looks long and happy. But if the nuts burst and fly apart when touched by the flames, the star-crossed lovers hardly need telling to think again about where the relationship is going.

PARTIES, PUMPKINS AND GAMES

According to tradition, Hallowe'en decorations should include fir branches, red-barked sprigs and Jack o' Lanterns. Pumpkins have replaced the original raw materials of turnips or swedes, but the important thing is to hollow out the pumpkin, carve or etch a ghoulish face into the side and burn a candle inside to provide an eerie light.

In the Somerset village of Hinton St George, near Yeovil, a famous lantern festival, Punkie Night, is held every year on the last Thursday in October. Years ago an autumn harvest fair was held in a nearby village to which the men would go, drink too much, and have difficulty making their way home. Their wives would dig up mangolds, scrape out the insides, carve leering faces in them, insert a candle and set off in search. History does not recount what happened when the hapless men were found.



Postcard from the past: in Victorian times the message of Hallowe'en was ghoulishly the same

The festival is now just for children. Designs of anything from Ninja Turtles to the Battle of Hastings are scratched on to the surface of the hollowed-out pumpkins, and at 6.30pm the children

begin their lighted procession around the village. In the most common Hallowe'en game, apples again feature as important symbols. In apple ducking, apples are floated in a large tub

of water, participants kneel in front of the tub with their hands tied behind their backs, and try to catch an apple with their teeth. The larger the apple, the greater the fortune they will one day amass. If

they cannot land one, they may well be doomed to poverty.

Trick or Treat, the most popular Hallowe'en game, has all the potential of evoking the angst witches and warlocks are capable of stirring up. Children, sometimes disguised as witches, demanding a Trick or Treat from house to house, seem to know no bounds for springing unpleasant surprises on those who will not play or pay up.

SONGS AND RHYMES

Hallowe'en, Hallowe'en. Witches, witches can be seen.

Scotland has the best tradition of Hallowe'en songs and rhymes and these should be sung in a broad Scots accent:

Hey-ho for Hallowe'en!
All the witches to be seen.
Some black and some green,
Hey-ho for Hallowe'en!

This is Hallowe'en
And the morn's Halloway;
If you want a true love
It's time you were away.
Tally on the window-board,
Tally on the green,
Tally on the window-board.
The morn's Hallowe'en.
Haily on a cabbage stalk,
Haily on a bean,
Haily on a cabbage stalk,
The morn's Hallowe'en.

Events

LONDON

□ Hampton Court games: Family trails for a range of ages and abilities. Hampton Court Palace, East Molesey, Surrey (081-977 8441). Today, tomorrow, 9.30am-4.30pm (last admission 3.45pm).

□ Adventure ahoj: Be a sailor for the day under instruction from the ship's duty officer. Certificate and badge on completion of mission. Suitable for seven to 14-year-olds. HMS Belfast, Morgan's Lane, Tooty Street, SE1. Today, tomorrow noon-5pm (071-407 6434).

□ Transport of delight: Hallowe'en trail around the museum with masks for all participants. London Transport Museum, Covent Garden, London WC2 (071-232 5600). Today, tomorrow 10am-6pm, last admission 5.15pm. £3.20, child £1.60, family ticket £7.50.

NATIONWIDE

□ Cleethorpes Cocker Championships: Friendly contest for all ages plus fancy dress competition for under 16s. The Nature House, Boating Lake, Cleethorpes. Today 3pm to dusk (0472 302320).

□ Cambridge activity day: Entertainment with a Hallowe'en theme for six to ten-year-olds. Cambridge and County Folk Museum, Castle Street, Cambridge (0223 355159). Today 2.30-5.45pm. Admission 80p. Booking advised.

□ Ironbridge on Allhallow's Eve: Popular annual event at Blis Hill Victorian "town". All exhibits gaslit, iron works and foundry operating plus fireworks display. The Ironbridge Gorge Museum, Ironbridge, Telford, Shropshire (0952 435222). Today 6pm onwards. £4, child £2, family ticket £12.

□ Maldenstone discovery trail: The new Leeds Castle Education Pack of booklets and fact sheets is good fun but also relevant for five to 14-year-olds studying history and science, key stages 1-3 of the national curriculum. Leeds Castle, Maidstone, Kent. Tel (0622 765400). Today tomorrow 11am-5pm. Pack £1.25, castle and grounds £6.20, child £4.20, family ticket £17.

□ Nottingham Robin Hood Pageant: Continuous medieval entertainment in the castle grounds today and tomorrow. Tonight only, spectacular floodlit just Nottingham, today, tomorrow 11am-4pm. 70p, child under 12 free. Joust 7-8.15pm. Tickets must be booked. £3, child £1.50. Details and booking from Nottingham TTC Wheeler Gate (0602 470661).

□ Shugborough Hallowe'en: Apple bobbing and other traditional diversions. Booking advised. Shugborough, Milford, near Stafford (0889 881388). Tonight, 6-9pm: £3, child £2.

□ Skipton Steam Up Atmosphere: Night with rides on steam trains, plus bonfire and fireworks display. Embury Steam Railway, Skipton, North Yorkshire (0756 794727). Tonight, trains from 5.30-8.30pm. All inclusive fares £3, child £1.50.

□ Waltham Abbey Hallowe'en watch: Dress up in spooky costume and go to the farm barn for a night of scary stories and songs. Take a lantern (suitable for over-18s). Meet at Hopes Hill Farm car park, Shrubbs Hill Lane, off Holyfield Road, Waltham Abbey, Essex. Tonight 7.30pm. Booking advisable (0992 713838). £3, child £2.

JUDY FROSHAUG

Reel venues

FOR details of Scottish country dance societies (SCDS) around the country ring 031-225 3854. For tuition books and tapes, call the Scottish National Dance Company on 0734 666006.

LONDON
□ Marlborough School: Sloane Avenue, SW3 (Margaret Shaw, 081-568 8072). Beginners, Wed, 6.30-8pm.

□ Wandsworth town hall: SW18 (Hany Verney, 0962 771 666). Beginners, first Thurs of every month (Oct-May), 7.30pm.

□ Little Ship Club: Church House, Holy Trinity, Brompton, SW3 (Bridget Lorimer, 081-993 0157). Intermediate, approx every third Thurs, 7.30pm.

□ Morley College SCDS: Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 (Marie Jamieson, 081-442 1776). Thurs, 7-9pm.

□ Leamdown Club: 9 Fitzmaurice Place, W1 (071-602 5189). Second and third Wed of every month.

NATIONWIDE

□ Chester: St Andrews Society, Caldwell Centre, Great Boughton, Chester (Mrs Phillips, 0244 390609). Beginners, Thurs, 7.15pm.

□ St Ninian's SCDS: St Werburgh's parish hall, Wilbraham Road, Chilton (061-881 5934). Beginners, Wed, 7.30pm.

□ Coventry: Corridor SCDS, Stylvechale Grange Church Centre (Mrs J. Wardrop, 0203 418487). General, Mon, 8-10pm.

□ Brighton: Southwick Community Centre (0273 584933). Mon, 8-10.30pm.

□ Newcastle SCDS: Fenham Hall Drive (0661 23805). First and third Tues every month, 7.30pm.

□ Newark SCDS: Congregational Church hall, Hutton Gardens (Mrs C. Saul, 0636 79635). Tues, 7.30-9.45pm.

There are two categories of dancer: "soft-shoes" or "hard-

Why reel men wear skirts and pumps

Take the floor — the Scottish country dance season is here

It's that time of year again, when the haggis is lanced, bagpipes skirl and men in kilts twirl. All over Britain halls are heaving with the wheeze of the squeezebox and the patter of pas de basques.

The southern reeling season kicked off a week ago with the annual Muckle Flugga ball in London, and many see next week's Reel Action at Ham-mersmith town hall, west London, as its highlight.

The word is that the real reel action is not in gilded ball-rooms but in local colleges and halls, where increasing numbers of Sassenachs, from lawyers to bus drivers, are lacing up pumps for Scottish hops.

Davina Miln, of the Little Ship Club, named after the pub in which it originally met but now meeting at Church House, Holy Trinity, Brompton, London SW3, dances six nights a week in different venues. Reeling, or more correctly Scottish country dancing, is a thoroughly social affair, in which each person dances with everyone in the set. "Where else do you have the chance to meet 200 men of an evening?" she asks. "Three marriages resulted last year from those who met at our club."

Having reeled through my teens, I have come to appreciate the thrill of the highland dance: it generates its own energy and excitement. "Far from being embarrassed at partying with my family, I'd feel cheated if I hadn't danced with dad and my brothers," Ms Miln says. "And mild flirtation is an integral part of reeling; men and women should keep good eye contact."

There are two categories of dancer: "soft-shoes" or "hard-

shoes", though many fall somewhere in between. Soft-shoes are often members of the Royal Scottish Country Dancing Society, the enthusiasts dedicated to "getting it right". The society's John Laurie insists: "We set standards but we don't want to be elitist."

Less charitable members do not take kindly to beginners disrupting the set, or to people having more fun than is deemed appropriate. But, to be fair, the society is largely responsible for preserving the 5,000 or more Scottish country dances.

The hard-shoe brigade, known as "Hoorays", are die-hard ball-goers and make much noise in the process. Partial to punctuating each reel with "Youp" and "Hee-ooht", they glide and shuffle across the dance floor. To the masters of pas de basques, the sloppy movement is known as the "county roll". The hard-shoe repertoire is limited to about eight or 12 dances.

A reels night at Wandsworth, south London, is "an essential part of the London scene", says a hard-shoe dancer. "There the emphasis is on having a good time, and if you whirl your partner into orbit or slip over, nobody minds."

If Scottish country dancing is technically a "polite" form of dance, its origins are undeniably primitive. You could be excused for thinking that the foursome — in which men

leap up and down flailing their arms in the air, not unlike stage bawling for the attention of a doe — was a mating ritual. And when else, as in the Hamilton House reel, can a woman dance towards a man, smile coquettishly, cock a snook at him and turn to the adjacent male with a flourish — and get away with it? This reel is said to have originated from a young aristocrat teasing her lover, and then turning to her husband.

Over the years attempts to remain well-mannered have prevailed. In the 18th century, Allan's Ballroom Guide recommended dancers to "avoid vulgar practices... making a noise with your feet, spitting in the fire, on the floor, or carpet... this will make others suppose that you have not been accustomed to polite society."

"Anybody can reel if they learn to listen to the music; it tells you when to start out on the next figure," says Peter Knight, the founder of the Little Ship Club. Once you can adapt them to almost any dance. Beginners are nurtured in practice sessions and may then join dance evenings of mixed abilities.

St Colomba's church hall in Knightsbridge, London, is one of many venues where there are dance nights open to people from any group. If there's live music you pay £3, but normally it costs about the same as a Mars Bar for three hours.



Reeling: it generates energy, excitement, even marriage

full flight: feet seemed barely to touch the ground as about 60 dancers leapt, skipped and bounced, turning their partners with supreme control and elegance to a four-piece band. Partners teamed up regardless of age or gender. I spotted George, a young ex-morris dancer who had traded in his bells and pom-poms for a kilt and sporran, dancing with Peggy, a spirited 79-year-old, who told me: "When a man asks you to dance, you go."

George later explained that the fun of the dance lay in the mental discipline of "getting it right". Dancing with a different partner every time seems to add to the challenge.

The last dance before the break was "MacDonald of the Isles, in three please" (time, that is). Handbooks were left

on chairs and babies in baskets, as couples filed on to the floor in neat lines. The fiddle struck up and they were off. There were no wallflowers, save Peter Smith, an environmental health officer, who came over to find out why I wasn't dancing. I blushed, and told him I was a bit rusty. He admitted he had taken up Scottish country dancing to meet people and keep him young. He winked and said: "I want to drop dead in my nineties doing a reel."

I left the hall musing on the spectacle of Scots culture in exile. A highland celtidh, with its whisky and sing-song, might be more spontaneous. But its more refined southern version is still a heady brew.

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Francesca Greenoak admires the Johnsons' 20-year devotion to their beautiful, eclectic Essex arboretum

Over the years, the Johnsons

● Mr and Mrs Johnson are opening the garden for Times readers next Monday from 2.5pm. Saling Hall is six miles northwest of Braintree, between Braintree and Dunmow; turn north off A120 at the Saling Oak. £1.50, child free.

Autumn brilliance: Hugh Johnson integrates rare and familiar trees

WEEKEND TIPS



- Plant or move herbaceous perennials during mild periods, when the ground is neither frozen nor waterlogged.
- Remove the last of the bedding plants and compost them.
- Plant winter containers with dwarf conifers, ivies, winter pansies, and bulbs for next spring.
- Prepare ground and plant new hedges.
- Pile gravel around alpine to prevent them sitting in damp soil.

Your mother would have had no difficulty at all in finding a man on a tricycle. There were a lot of them about, in those days. They wore khaki baladava helmets and muntins with the flaps cut off, and a Greatcoat, on their backs. They were everywhere, and showed that they were not combed. They had done their bit, they had gone right through the Last Lot, but the most interesting thing about them, if you were a five-year-old boy, was that their tricycles were the wrong way round. Yours had one wheel at the front and two at the back, whereas theirs had two at the front and one at the back. This was to give stability to a fourth wheel which was set above the front two, a big stone wheel, this time, cleverly

**The back-to-front
tricycle that
brought pilchards
to mind**

I had of course, interim, heard sounds a little like it — when getting a key cut, say, or inadvertently bumping into Janet Street-

No, I wouldn't. Nothing surprises me, these days. What it does do to me need not detain us, but were Mr Malcolm Rifkind to turn up at my front door with his handcart and a requisition order for my railings because, since nobody else now wanted to build the Eurofighter, Britain had decided to go it alone, that wouldn't surprise me, either.

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from the Museum
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above), like ancient
Egyptian bingo for 2
or more players,
ages 7-adult.

Beauty and the Beast (MB Games, £15.25). For 2-4 players, ages 5 and up. Players must help Belle climb tower and save beast from wicked spell.



Right: Labyrinth (Ravensburger, £9.99), award-winner in the Family Games section of the 1992 Good Toy Awards. For 1-4 players, ages 3-adult. Board is an imaginatively illustrated maze of passageways. Players venture along them seeking treasure and trying to avoid moving walls and lurking traps. The winner collects all the treasure and escapes.



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WHAT TO WEAR

Active ingredients of one-stop dressing

Adaptable clothes you can wear any time, any place, anywhere —
Tom Rhodes surveys cool outdoor dressers

This is a story of Henry and Caroline, of James and Lucinda and Edward and Alice. In short, it is a tale of skiing in Verbier and gardening in Fulham, of climbing in the Pyrenees and strolling in the Cotswolds and perhaps, just occasionally, of bobsledding in St Moritz.

Henry is a banker, Caroline a milliner, James imports tea while Lucinda sews nuptial gowns for the very rich. Edward, formerly the buyer for a fashion house, practises the art of French landscape in a Notting Hill garret. Alice works in corporate communications for a record company.

These are not their real names but each of these characters does exist and each, so professionally disparate, has a common bond: a love for the great outdoors.

As winter fast approaches,



they, and their numerous country cousins, meet in each other's houses and flats. In their parents' homes in Hertford, Hereford and Hampshire, and in noisy hostels in central London, where they discuss plans for the next weekend, the fortnight's skiing and the new Italian shrubs that one has just acquired for

his small but perfectly designed garden in Chelsea. Later the conversation, inevitably, turns to clothes.

They would not consider themselves fashion victims and yet, as James, who is soon hoping to relive last year's triumph on the Cresta Run, makes clear: "I spend so much of my time outside, either for

work, skiing or riding, that the clothes I wear are incredibly important."

Like his chums, James is not prepared to spend thousands on different uniforms for separate pursuits. A skiing anorak is as useful to him as he rides out with a morning spring in Lambourne as it is off piste in Val d'Isère. Caroline mentions that she has just bought an all-in-one Day-Glo suit for her skiing holiday in Aspen this year. A chorus of disapproval echoes around the pub.

"Much more practical to wear leggings and a waterproof jacket," Alice says. "Those suits just make you look like a poseur or a ski instructor."

The question of practicality and comfort, coupled with a wish to be a part of the active crowd, is fundamental to this ethos of dress. Hard-wearing trousers, colourful jerseys and "sensible" shoes should be as effective on the slopes as they are in the demi-monde of après-ski.

"The last thing you need when going on holiday, or away for a weekend in the country, is to be weighed down by a bulging suitcase, filled with useless articles of clothing," Lucinda says. There are those who dismiss this brash approach. Exponents of ski extreme, serious climbers, riders — even some gardeners — believe that a necessary part of the activity is what you wear. "It would be quite impossible for me to ski some of the pistes that I do if I was wearing, for instance, an anorak and salopettes," says Jean-Claude Faudot, director of the Club des Sports in Val d'Isère.

For intrepid Britons, however, the sport is merely a means to an end. They have no wish to become professionals: it is a peculiarly British form of amateurism which has little to do with expertise, but everything to do with taking part.

While any self-respecting Parisian or Roman would wilt at the prospect, the outdoor set is happy to stride along London's King's Road dressed as if for a slope, a mountain or a wind-swept moor. "I find it is easily the most comfortable casual wear," Henry says.

Nevertheless, this pragmatic approach is in no way boring. There are hundreds of permutations possible with the same, minimal wardrobe. Satisfied that they have given due consideration to their clothing, the six revert to the debate about where to go next. A weekend in Shropshire, a few days at a Scottish pile, or perhaps some early skiing on the glaciers of Zermatt? Whichever they choose, Henry, Caroline, James, Lucinda, Alice and Edward know they will be dressed for the part.

REAL PEOPLE. REAL CLOTHES

Right: Catherine Buxton wears: polo neck, £24, Thomas Pink, 35 Dover Street, London W1 and branches; beige jodhpurs, £40, Marilyn Anselm for Hobbs, branches in London and nationwide; leather jacket, £549, Cheviot, from Graduate, 30 James Street, W1, Harrods, SW1; jumper, £39.99, Next, branches nationwide; coat with fake fur, £89.99, Next; boots, £135, Timberland, 72 New Bond Street, W1. Eric Dismore wears (seated): jumper, £135, Timberland (as above) and Harrods; jacket, £90, Boden (mail-order 071-608 3230); trousers, Blazer, £45, 33a King's Road, SW3. Rupert Swaney wears (right): Tenson coat, £208, Harrods, as above; jeans, £34.99, Next Directory 0345 100500; waistcoat, £45, Boden, as above. Left: Eric wears scarf, £17, Racing Green (mail-order 0789 200244); sweater, £40, Blazer, as above; trousers, Burberry, £89.50, 18-22 Haymarket, W1; coat, £265, Harrods, as above; Rupert (right) wears Timberland jacket, £250, as above; polo neck, Thomas Pink, as above; sweater, Blazer, as above.



Robin Young finds Gothenburg relaxing, clean and well-ordered

Quietly stalking the stuffed elephant

Of all the continental ferry destinations served from Britain, Gothenburg has the biggest tourist attraction: the Liseberg pleasure park, which pulls in three million visitors a year. But fear not. From late September it is closed until April.

Gothenburg remains a glorious destination for a relaxing short break by sea, with a day and a night spent on board the ferry on both the outward and inward journeys, or by air, or by a time-saving sail-and-fly arrangement, leaving Harwich on Friday night and flying back on Sunday evening.

For sea passengers, there are leisurely opportunities aboard ship to catch up with eight films coming and going, or to eat oneself into a torpor from a smorgasbord spread of more than 100 choices.

Gothenburg is a cosmopolitan effort. The solemn, honest Swedes are quick to tell you they could not have managed it alone. They had the Dutch to reclaim land and build canals, Scots to engineer the harbour and shipbuilders' yards, Norwegians to pioneer the fishing industry, Germans to administer the town council and trade, and English to open schools and hospitals.

Many of Gothenburg's businesses and institutions still carry British names. A sugar refiner called Carnegie founded the first brewery (now converted into a waterside Nowotel), the Dicksons developed timber export, William Chalmers set up the technical



Straight down the line: Gothenburg still has efficient trams plying its tree-lined avenues

university, and a shipbuilder called Keiller bequeathed the town one of its hillside parks.

The Swedes call Gothenburg "little London", a 19th-century satirist having quipped: "When it rains in London, gentlemen in Gothenburg carry umbrellas", yet Gothenburg is not like London at all. It is quiet, well-ordered and clean.

It still has trams plying the tree-lined avenues, and it is comfortable and pleasurable to explore on foot. The Key to Gothenburg card (available from tourist offices, hotels and Pressbyrå kiosks) costs 100 Swedish kronor (about £11) for one day, 175 for two, and 225 for three, with reduced rates for children, and covers travel

on buses, trams, and car-parking, and entry to museums, parks, sports centres and places of interest.

Much of Gothenburg's prime glory is past but still pull into the town from Germany and Denmark and there is a 7am fish auction at the fishing harbour on weekday morning. The



She wears: scarf, £17, and gloves, £5, Racing Green, as above; green polo neck, £24, Thomas Pink, as above; black ski pants, £79, Harrods, as above; i.k.s. ski jacket, £265, from Harrods. He wears: padded coat, £84.99, Next, as above; Kelly Mountain ski top, £119, Harrods; yellow cords, £46, Boden, as above; polo neck, £24, Thomas Pink, as above; scarf, £17, Racing Green, as above.

Photographs by John Hudson; styled by Victoria Pyman; hair, make-up by Keri Williams as Joy Goodman

De rigueur for the slopes

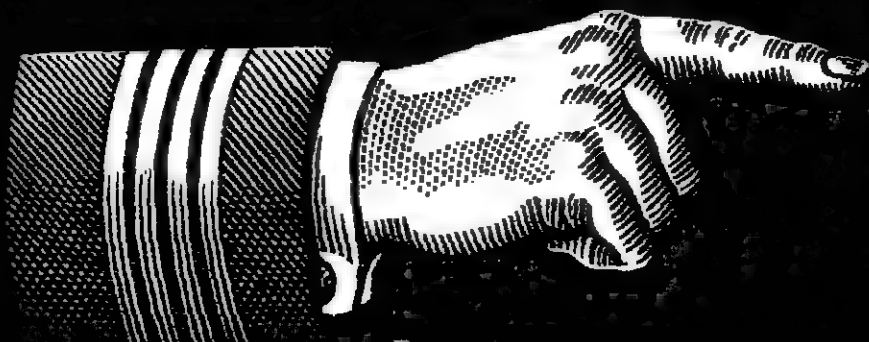
Choosing accoutrements for the slopes is a minefield for the fashion-conscious. Should it be Bolle or are Raybans still de rigueur? What colour sun-block should one wear, is a hat necessary?

This year, it seems all is rosy for practical types. Bloc sunglasses — the

cheaper British make — are expected to be in vogue, coloured zinc gloss is out, invisible lip balm is in. Patterned hats are a must, and ideally should match the jersey.

As for music and reading, forget Ondaatje and Unsworth, REM and Prince. It has to be Sex and Erotica.

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SPORTING LIFE

Boogie on a snowboard

Andy Martin solves the two-ski problem by chucking one out

It will come as no surprise to a lot of skiers that the word "ski" (meaning, in Finno-Ugric, "split wood") comes from the same Indo-European root as *schism* and *schizoid*. The main trouble with two skis is getting them to do the same thing at the same time. They are apt to have a split personality which can rip you apart. The elegant solution is to use just one ski: a snowboard.

A snowboard is to mountains what a surfboard is to waves. It is as much fun as you can have with your salopettes on. If you want to look cool, it is the indispensable accessory (the monoski is definitely out). These days the snowboard can be seen carving down the piste all over Europe and the States, but it really comes into its own off-piste, where it is the ultimate powder vehicle.

The same technique works in all conditions. The main difference is stance: you have one foot (left is "natural", right is "goofy") locked in front of the other, both lateral to the board. And you are always on the uphill edge. All you have to do is boogie about like a mambo dancer and you are there. The hips are the steering wheel, the upper body and legs follow.

It sounds like the perfect panacea for all your skiing problems. But there are one or two catches. For starters, you have to learn how. I was taught in Chamonix in the French Pyrenees. In the summer it is a spa town with therapy for arthritis and rheumatism; in winter it drums up business for later in the year by introducing people to snowboards. Lourdes is also conveniently placed nearby. Actually, I got off fairly lightly with only severe bruising and abrasions.

My old friend Ted Dearhurst was less lucky. After losing consistently on the prosurfing tour for a decade, he was hoping to change his luck in the inaugural OP Winter-surf Pro where you catch waves at Huntington Beach in California and then drive up to Big Bear Mountain and slide



One man and his board: first essential is to find out if you are a "goofy" or a "natural"

down another kind of face. "I hadn't really mastered the snowboard," he told me while lying in hospital with both legs in the air. "But I thought to myself, 'What the hell - it's only skiing, at least you can't drown.' Then I fell 600 feet."

The moral of the story is, don't try to run before you can walk. Which reminds me: you can't walk with a snowboard anyway. Not only can you not

go clambering up the mountain as you can do on skis, it's not exactly a piece of cake to get on a T-bar or a chairlift wearing one either. You have to learn to hop. And take snowshoes if you are travelling far off the beaten track.

What is harder on skis is easy on a snowboard, e.g. a 180-degree turn with one hand drawing lines in the snow; conversely what is easy on skis is next to impossible on a snowboard, e.g. schussing (you're bound to catch an edge) and traversing without losing height. Another drawback will strike you if (or when) you fall. Unlike skis, the snowboard does not snap off under pressure, so bits of your anatomy are apt to snap off instead.

The main risk attached to a sport this hip is that youth culture will muscle in and monopolise it. When I learnt, my 12-year-old cousin from Australia, already fluent in the vocabulary of "tripping", "shredding" and "aerials", was always two steps ahead of me. But I've heard of the case of a man in his fifties who has sold his skis, devotes six weeks every season to snowboarding, and is trying to persuade his teenage daughters to skip school and join him.

Board facts

■ The British Snowboard Association (BSA) is running a beginners camp at Peisey Les Arcs in France from January 2-9 1993. The price for the week is £290 which includes travel, accommodation and food. Details from Geoff Parr (0792 466834).

■ For the more advanced the BSA is running an instructor's course in Kaprun, Austria, in conjunction with the Austrian Snowboard Association, in November. Contact Martin Drayton (0784 253201) days, 081-993 7911 evenings.

■ Martin Drayton is also available to give expert advice at Princes Snowboard Shop, Clockhouse Lane, Ashford, Middlesex (0784 253201, fax 0784 247169), which also offers rental and dry slope instruction. For equipment and tuition in Scotland: the Snowboard Academy, Aviemore, Grampian (0479 810336).

■ Board prices vary from £299 (the Kemper Intruder) to £509 (the Burton Brushie). "Free riding" boards cater for most needs on and off the piste. At opposite ends of the spectrum are "alpine" boards (narrow and stiff) for hard snow racing and "freestyle" and "half-pipe" (broader and more turned up at nose and tail) for radical manoeuvres. Lengths vary but 160cm is average. You can start with ski boots but you will eventually need the more flexible snowboard boots.

■ Chale Snowboards offers a package with use of Burton boards and instruction by BSA members. For brochure write to Ian Trotter, 1 Aldworth Avenue, Wantage, Oxon, OX12 7EJ (0235 767182).

there are plenty of unusual attractions lurking around the corner

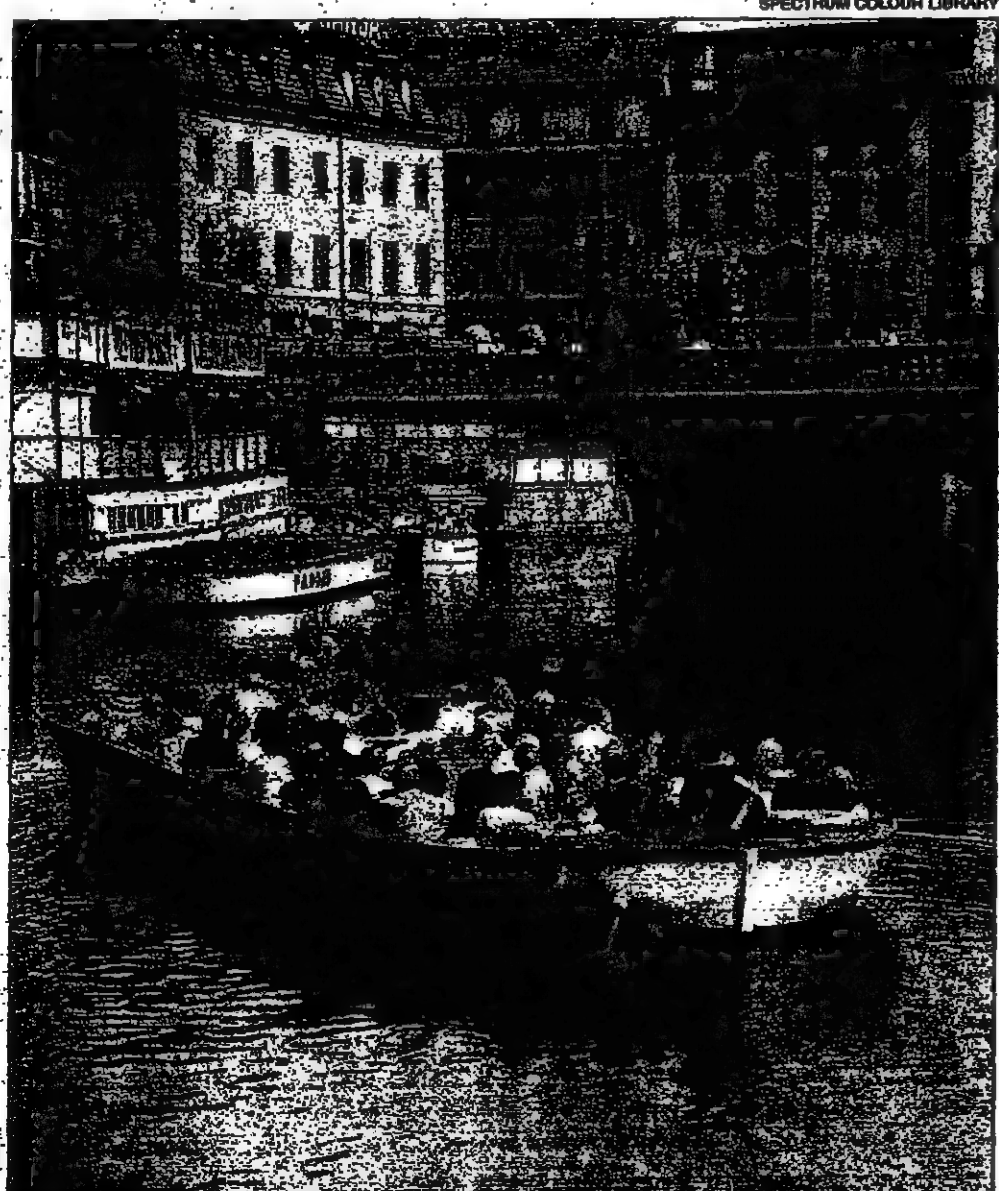
WEEKEND BREAK

along the quay at Lilla Harna, beneath the newest skyscraper, are a collection of the me Centrum, among stately four-master, the and a fully armed navy frigate, the

the Maritime Museum on Karl Johansgatan, a nautical knacker's yard of models, maritime flags, figureheads and sea celebrates Göthe's east India trade, and a then this port was Brit- teline to and from a dominated by Napo-

dignified canal-side century building which e headquarters of the h East India Company uses the archaeological, raphic and historical ns, while in the art m at least one painting, usenius's *Drunkenness*, bald it might make you out loud.

sombrerly, the Natural Museum has the finest example of a African elephant, and a rfectly preserved blue beached in 1965 and acted together with of rivets. It is a touching, y Swedish gesture that fied animal among the nds is set aside for children to stroke: a lop-sided lion takes with a puma and a wolf et of the month.



Down by the riverside: tour boats offer a view of Gothenburg's historic maritime glory

for imaginative cookery. For authentic Swedish food in the traditional homely matiner, try Weisse on Drottninggatan. Sundays are for the parks and Gothenburg's are glorious. The largest, Slotsskogen, has countless joggers, wildfowl and seal pools, and aviaries. More centrally, the horticultural society gardens nurture 3,500 varieties of roses, which the methodical Swedes have arranged in order of historical development, and in their midst a Crystal Palace-like palm house (a carefully pre- served 19th-century British ex- port) is filled with warmth and tropical and Mediterranean plants and flowers.

In the separate Botanical Gardens, landscaped through four valleys, the hot-houses shelter 1,500 species of orchids, which make a vibrant display when they flower (most by February to April). Liseberg re-opens in mid-April. It is not all terrifying switchback rides, dizzy loop-the-loops, or Star Wars simulators. There are also peaceable rides for toddlers and the faint-hearted, bandstands, stage shows, 11 restaurants and a floor for ballroom dancing (perennially popular in Swe- den), where couples of a certain age gyrate like vintage dodgem cars. You choose your own pace in Gothenburg.

How to get there

■ Scamours (071-839 2927) can arrange short breaks using BA and SAS flights, from £255 a person for two nights.

■ Scandinavian Airways (0255 240240) offers two nights on board and two in Gothenburg from £111 a person.

■ Sail-and-fly weekend packages, leaving Harwich Friday, flying back Sunday, are from £216 a person (quote booking reference X444).

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Up on the roof among the trees

A roof garden is a worthwhile home improvement, says Rachel Kelly—but don't bring the house down

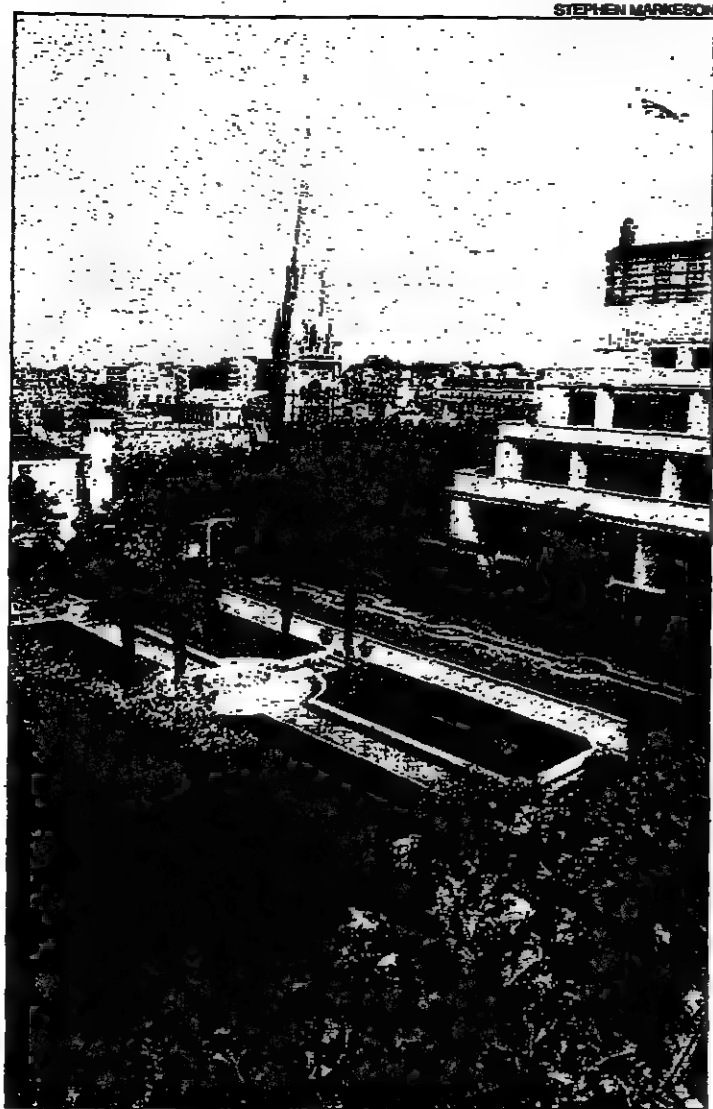
Roof-gardening circles tell the story, probably apocryphal, of how a member of the royal family built a roof garden at Kensington Palace. He asked the ducal roof-gardener, Ralph Hancock (who designed the Kensington Roof Gardens above what was once Derry and Toms), to design a rhododendron garden. Mr Hancock warned that the chosen roof would not support the weight. The royal enthusiast said it would. It didn't, and the roof fell in.

Such a cautionary tale should be etched on the hearts of homeowners wishing to create their patch of Eden in the sky, ever improving their home as they fail to sell it. The Halifax building society reports that two in five customers have gone in for some form of home-improvement during the last year. "People are improving rather than moving because they can't face the hassle of selling," says Mark Hemmingsway from the Halifax. "In the past, people would improve with a view to moving on. Now they are improving with a view to staying put."

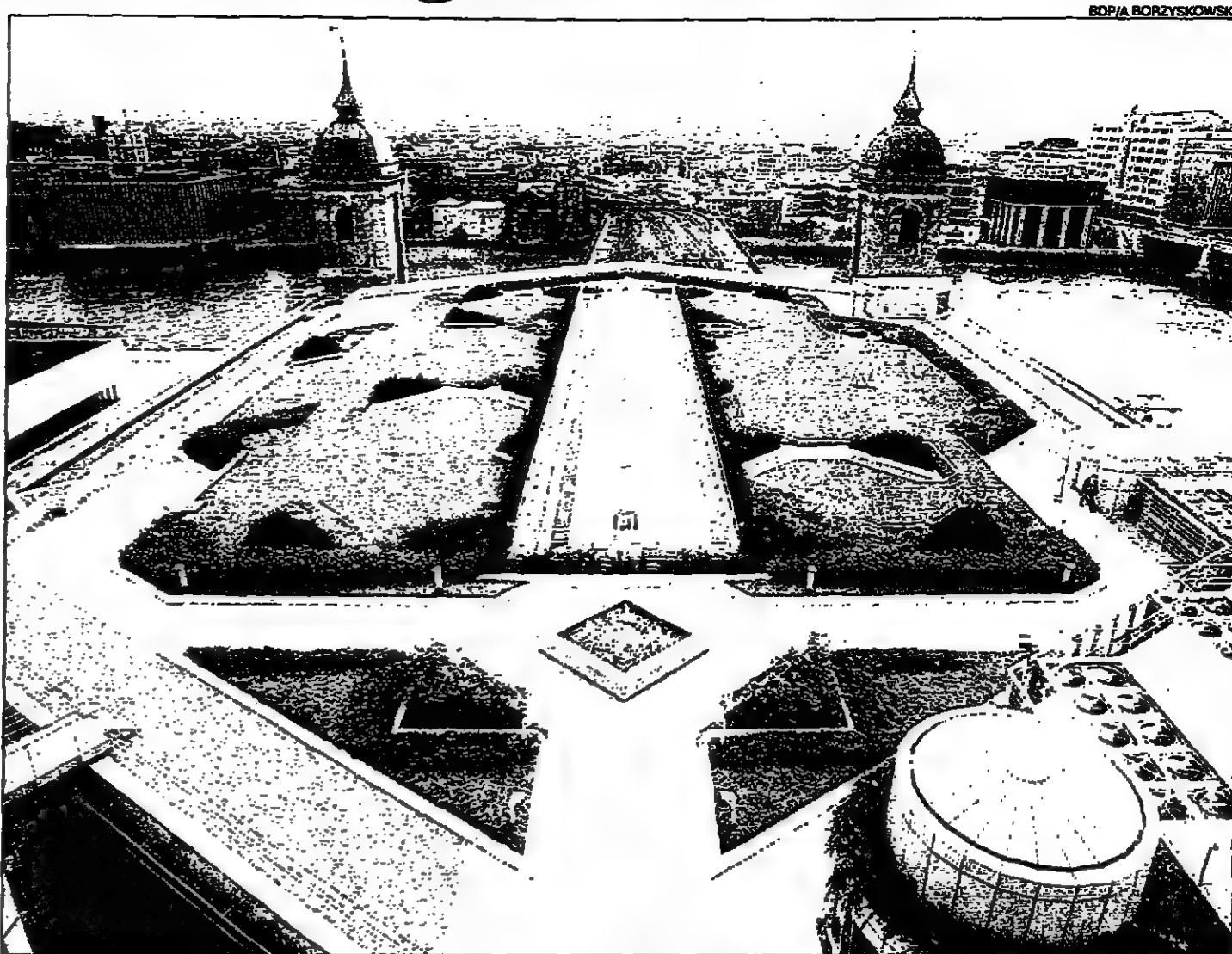
In the city, that could mean greening a patch of terrace or roof which would otherwise be dead space. The public's green-mindedness is hard to measure, but council planning departments that process such planning applications are a useful barometer. (If in doubt, apply for permission. Council inspectors or neighbours could otherwise report you.)

Michael Lowndes, a design and conservation officer from Westminster city council, has noted an increase in such applications. "I can't put exact numbers on it, but we are now getting fewer applications for major changes from developers, and more for small-scale changes from families."

Like other metropolitan councils, Westminster has no specific policies on roof gardens but judges each application on its merits. While roof gardens can sometimes help commercial developers to push through planning permission for a new building, as the developers present the garden (such as that at Cannon Bridge) as an amenity for the community, domestic applications are more closely scrutinised. Conservationists are concerned



Heights of garden grandeur: two examples of the greening of London's roof-tops are, left, the Kensington Roof Gardens on the old Derry and Toms building and, right, the formality of Cannon Bridge



that the original roof form should be preserved, undisturbed, by trellises, railings and sheds. Neighbours should be protected from the prying eyes of budding gardeners, or the noisy antics of their friends partying up there among the geranium tubs.

The ideal domestic roof garden, as far as planners are concerned, is one that is discreetly incorporated into the original building or roof, invisible from the street. "This can be achieved by setting the roof garden back from the front of a mansard roof, for example," Mr Lowndes says.

Many will balk at such major structural changes. They will rather seek the simplest of roof gardens: a few pots on an existing terrace. Yet even then, drainage and the extra weight of such a garden can create technical problems.

First you must waterproof the roof, with either a double layer of bitumen, or a black rubberoid paint, says Clive McDonnell, an

associate with the landscape architects Derek Lovejoy Partnership, and expert in such matters. "But be careful not to create a giant tank of water. There must be drainage exits, and these can too easily be blocked by fallen leaves."

As for weight, the best tip is to place pots near structural walls or columns. "That's where the roof has most strength," says Mr McDonnell. "You could also put in new cross beams or a lightweight timber deck, supported by structural walls, to help take the weight by spreading it."

Choose dwarf plants and shrubs, and if you must have trees, pick miniature varieties of cherry, mountain ash or Judas trees to limit the weight. Self-sustaining plants and succulents similar to those in a rock garden, such as stonecrop or houseleek, which need little water, are suitable. Beware of climbers that could creep between roof tiles. Russian vines or clematis need to be watched.

The plant selection should also acknowledge the micro-climate created by the building, which could well be warmer or windier than at street-level.

Professionals give advice on weight loads reluctantly. The ideal, they stress, is to contact a surveyor, or even a structural engineer to work out what weight your roof can take. "Old buildings are infinitely variable," says Mr McDonnell.

More ambitious roof gardens, which appear no different from their ground-level cousins, start with a waterproof base with a root barrier membrane, above which is a filter. The filter is usually 10cm in depth, made of leca, a light expanded clay aggregate. Above it is a layer of soil, about 40cm of lightweight compost (normal topsoil is about 30 per cent heavier). Some man-made soils release their nutrients slowly and so inhibit excessive plant growth.

Water from the soil drains through to the filter, thereby pre-

venting water-logging in the soil which will kill plants as fast as drought. Within the filter are drainage points.

Such a garden is ambitious and would usually require the help of a landscape gardener or roof-garden specialist, such as Erisco-Bowder in Ipswich. Jacklyn Johnston, author of *Building Green*, to be published next year, estimates that it would cost £20 to £25 a square metre to create such a garden on your own, or £50 using a contractor. As techniques improve, costs should reduce.

It could be worth it. Martin Summer's garden in Chelsea, using trellises and tubs, is overflowing with autumnal colour — rhododendrons, camellias, aucubas and innumerable ivies asserting their presence as winter approaches, a source of infinite delight to him and his neighbours. And there is a further bonus — ecologists stress that a meadow on the roof will cut your fuel bills.

BUY YOUR OWN ROOF GARDEN

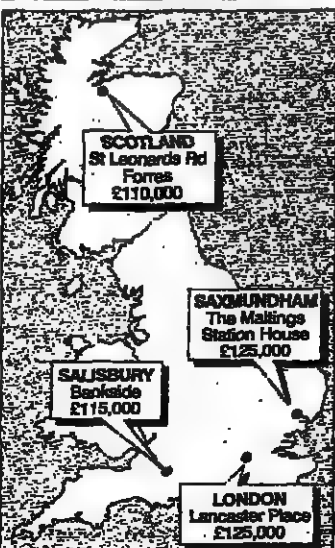


A three-bedroom flat in Ennismore Gardens, South Kensington, lies beneath this 15ft by 15ft roof terrace with garden shed, night lighting and electrically operated canopy — yours for £895,000 through Knight Frank & Rutley

FOR SALE

about
£120,000

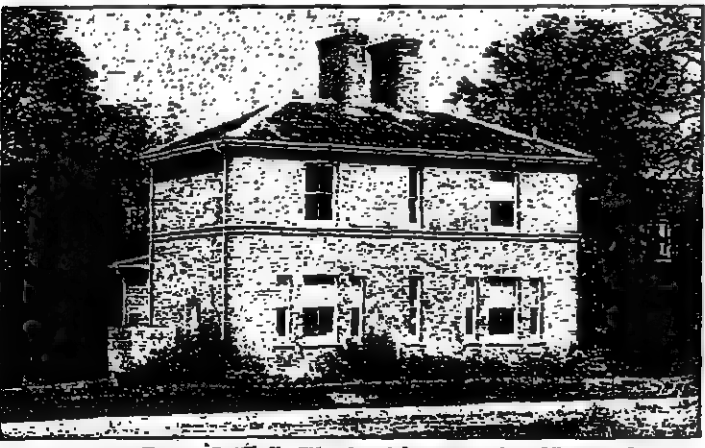
Caroline Morse
suggests woodland,
wood fireplaces or
wood screening



Nr Salisbury, Wiltshire. Grade II listed detached cottage. Two bedrooms, bathroom, two reception rooms, kitchen. About £115,000 (contact Strutt & Parker, 0722 328741).



Forres, Scotland: Canton Villa, St Leonards Road. Victorian property backed by woodland. Four bedrooms, two bathrooms, four reception rooms (including sun lounge), wooden fireplaces. About £110,000 (G.A. Property Services Ltd, 0343 548861).



Nr Saxmundham, Suffolk: The Maltings Station House, Snape Bridge. 1/2 acre, with York stone fireplaces and pine screening. Three bedrooms, two reception rooms, study, pantry and cellar. About £125,000 (Bidwells, 0473 611644).



London: 7 Lancaster Cottages, Lancaster Place, SW19. Two-bedroom house with a detached garage. Reception room, kitchen and bathroom. About £125,000 (John D. Wood, 081-944 7172).

If you like to be beside the seaside



Buyer's France

THE COTENTIN
PENINSULA

Situated in a peaceful village, near the town of Valognes, about 30 minutes from the ferry port of Cherbourg in the Cotentin peninsula, this attractive stone farmhouse (right), which has been fully restored, is for sale at FF795,000 (£97,500) including agency and notary fees.

It has an oak-beamed living-room with open stone fireplace, a large fitted kitchen, three bedrooms and two bathrooms, plus a large attic suitable for conversion, and a lovely garden with garage and substantial outbuildings. The UK agent is Normandy & Brittany Cottages, 22 Chesnut Road, London W14 9QU (071-381 4433).

The rugged Cotentin peninsula, northwest of Paris, is cheap and good value, and the area is popular with British yachtsmen. Travel northwest from Cherbourg to La Hague, the northern tip of the peninsula, and you will find a land

of gorse-covered hills and dramatic cliffs, scattered with picturesque fishing harbours and fine, sandy beaches.

Coastal prices start at FF140,000, which buys a one-bedroom seafront apartment in the small, unpretentious seaside resort of Barneville Carteret, about 35 minutes from Cherbourg. A two-bedroom house in a new beach-front development in the resort is priced at about FF272,000.



Picturesque village: this large restored farmhouse is FF795,000

A few miles inland you can buy a shabby, but habitable, two-bedroom cottage with a garden for as little as FF195,000. Nearby a beautiful ten-room presbytery, neglected and in need of modernisation, is for sale at FF380,000, including all fees.

CHERYL TAYLOR

Heap of the week: Bramcote

Case of root decay



Watch this house: in a few years it could disappear in the thick

The front door of Bramcote is an amazing sight. Only the pediment is visible; the door steps and railings are entirely shrouded in creeper. All around, elders and saplings have taken root, and in a few more years the whole house could disappear in a huge, self-sown thicket.

Three miles from Polesworth in Warwickshire, it stands in spectacular isolation on an eminence in the midst of rolling cornfields, where the few surviving hedgebanks are entirely bare. Not a tree is to be seen except for an isolated clump on another hilltop 300 yards in front of the house, seemingly a relic of a long-vanished park.

Immediately beside Bramcote is the obvious cause of its demise (but lately of its survival), took three very large corrugated barns, all part of a working farm. And only a few hundred yards beyond is the M42 linking Birmingham with the northern stretch of the M1.

Yet the view to and from the house has genuine grandeur, and a belt of trees would soon shut out much of the noise of the motorway traffic, which is a hiss more than a roar.

The farm manager, who lives in the new house immediately behind, lived in the hall when he first came to work here. "But it was run down even then. It was let for nearly 150 years before, and that's never good for a house," he says. Bramcote's appeal architecturally lies in its powerfully swept

up gables. It is one of a fascinating group of early 18th-century provincial baroque manor houses with pronounced gables covering the whole main front, in contrast to the more usual central pediments. Others are Hellaby Hall in Yorkshire and Swanton in Kent, both of which have been derelict in recent years.

They are boldly curvilinear sil-

houettes and have a decidedly continental flavour, more Dutch or German than English, as if they were the work of some Hanoverian bricklayer. Bramcote also takes character from the numerous close-set windows with arched heads — nine across the main front, though some appear to have been blind from the start.

Although the roof is steadily

collapsing, North Warwickshire district council will not take action. "We are a rate-capped authority and the members are unlikely to serve a repairs notice on any listed building," one official said.

Deer, fortunately, has been relatively slow, although over the past ten years most of the main cornice has fallen away.

The owners served notice of impending demolition on the council but took no action, and in March 1981 the hall was listed Grade II. A subsequent application to demolish was never determined because the council took the view that the environment department would never agree to demolition.

"After advertising the property," the agents say, "we have grown weary of showing it to people who recoil at the closeness of the farm buildings. We suggested to the planners they might allow some building at the edge of nearby Warton village in return for moving the farm and restoring the house. No luck."

The owners are James Gilmour and Co of Sutton Coldfield, who farm 2,000 acres here. The house is not being actively marketed but the agents are Shakespeare, McTurk and Graham of Leicester (0533 547998), who say they would need to consider "price and purpose" from any potential buyer.

MARCUS BINNEY

America's killing fields

**Benedict
Nightingale
celebrates a
sardonic evening
of bangs and
whimperers at
the Donmar
Warehouse**

Stephen Sondheim's latest musical got some unenthusiastic reviews from the American critics last year, perhaps because it opened during the Gulf War. It was a time when George Bush walked tall, and even hardened New Yorkers felt uneasy about the show's subject: the potting of presidents. But Sam Mendes's confident production confirms the minority view, that *Assassins* is one of Sondheim's more fascinating exercises in the offbeat. A sardonic celebration of destructive losers, it certainly launches the rejigged, remodelled Donmar Warehouse, in London, with an audacious blend of bang and whimper.



Apart from that, Mrs Lincoln, how did you enjoy the play? David Firth as a plotting John Wilkes Booth in *Assassins*.

McKinley, to Squeaky Fromme, the Manson groupie who stalked Gerald Ford. David Firth's lordly, stammering Booth reappears often afterwards, somewhat unceremoniously transmuted into a sinister linkman. He whispers encouragement to hesitant killers and, in perhaps the show's weakest scene, persuades Gareth Snook's despairing Oswald, who meant only to commit suicide, to become "the big one, the one that's going to turn it all up". He even turns the curtain rods Lee Harvey has eccentrically brought to the book depository into a hunting rifle.

There are other times when one can see the American reviewers' collective point.

John Weidman's book is structurally slapdash, coming as it does in disconnected vignettes, and can be awkward when it does what history disallows but drama demands: introduce assassin to assassin. Again, one has to read the programme to make some helpful discoveries, such as the background of another of Ford's mortal enemies, Louise Gold's scatty, Sara Jane Moore. And there really is a connection between Booth, who sees himself as Brutus, and Ciaran Hinds's barking mad Byck, who is still wearing his grimy Santa outfit when he goes to hijack the 747 he plans to crash into Nixon's White House.

Yet the show's originality, bite and drive should silence most doubts. The songs vary from parody ballads to spoof Broadway schmaltz in praise of guns, and include some of Sondheim's most incisive lyrics and bold musical effects. Smug tourists melodiously celebrate F.D.R.'s escape from death while Paul Harrihy's Zangara, a failure at assassination as at everything else, sits in the electric chair balefully growling "You think I care? I no care". Henry Goodman's manic Guitau scampers up and down the gallows steps while a balladeer invites him to look on the bright side and remember he'll be remembered. Strongest of all is an inverted national anthem, a jeremiad for America's no-

hopers that boils with frustration and rancorous bewilderment: "Where's my prize? I want my prize." Here at least Sondheim coheres his mini-nightmares into one big bad dream. Their precise motives may differ, but a kind of vindictive disappointment disfigures all these people. They are in what everybody tells them is the American Eden, yet all they are offered is dead-sea fruit. How can they both take revenge on God and assert their own significance? Why, by an exemplary assassination. By the end of the evening what seems surprising is not that some Americans have killed their presidents, but that so many have omitted to do so.

Flavour of the month, or rock of ages?

Bon Jovi's mixture as before, but Neil is forever Young

Although it is getting on for four years since Bon Jovi last released an album — the ten million-selling *New Jersey* — there is no sign of the band's musical physique running to fat. They do not make weak albums — the adjective is not in their vocabulary. However, rather like a weightlifter stuffed full of steroids, there is an unnaturally pumped and primed quality to the songs on their latest collection, *Keep The Faith* (Jambou/Mercury 514 197-2).

The sound is huge. From the bubblegum rock of "I'll Sleep When I'm Dead" to the overwrought ballad "Bed Of Roses", the guitar chords and cannon-shot drum sounds roll and ripple like thunder in the hills. "In These Arms" finds singer Jon Bon Jovi appropriating some of Bonzo's deep-voiced mannerisms and splicing them to the kind of killer chorus that has become Bryan Adams's trademark.

But apart from the time song, with its twirly dance-track drum rhythm, *Keep The Faith* conforms too rigidly to a

ROCK RECORDS

melodic heavy-rock formula that is due an overhaul.

The lyrics are especially threadbare, with "Dry County", a song decrying the plight of recession-torn America, providing a virtual compendium of rock 'n' roll clichés: "nothing good comes easy", "no one's getting out of here alive", and so on.

While other major-league bands such as U2 and INXS have taken a more thoughtful tack in the 1990s, Bon Jovi have stuck with the classic heavy-rock production values of the 1980s: a big, trashy sound which now seems to have all the flavour of processed cheese.

Perhaps modern studio technology is to blame — all that sophisticated gadgetry automating the music into perfect shape while robbing it of the personality of the musicians.

If so, it is not a fate which has befallen that crusty old maverick Neil Young, whose

new album *Harvest Moon* (Reprise 9362-45057-2) is even more conspicuously at odds with contemporary tastes in sound quality than usual.

In keeping with the vogue for belated "sequel" albums, Young has crafted *Harvest Moon* as what is being termed a "natural successor" to his chart-topping 1972 album *Harvest*, even rounding up the same musicians (the Stray Gators) for a second bite at the cherry.

In sharp contrast to his recent work, *Harvest Moon* was recorded at very low volume. The album has a delicate, country feel and resonates to the lachrymose strains of pedal steel, harmonica and the perfect harmony vocals of Linda Ronstadt and James Taylor.

There are no songs on this set to rival the celebrated "Heart Of Gold" or "Alabama" from *Harvest*, but the gentle spirit of that golden age is faithfully evoked, especially on the brooding "War Of Man".

DAVID SINCLAIR



Art of gold: Neil Young looks back two decades to his classic rock *Harvest Moon*.

Old heavy hands is back, as Dave Brubeck lingers among his souvenirs

Memories of a god grown old

The days when every hipster about town would rush to the shops to buy the latest Dave Brubeck offering are long gone. There has not been much to celebrate, in fact, since the reunion album with his alter ego, the late Paul Desmond, a decade and a half ago.

He has remained active, occasionally experimenting with orchestral compositions and playing the greatest hits at concerts, with the clarinetist Bill Smith doing his best to fill Desmond's shoes.

As he approaches his 72nd birthday, Brubeck strikes a valedictory note on *Once When I Was Very Young*

JAZZ RECORDS

(Limelight/Music Masters 844298), re-interpreting songs which summon up memories from the distant past. His choice of titles — "Yesterday's", "Gone With the Wind", "Among My Souvenirs" — says it all, while the overarching theme gives the album a sense of purpose which has been absent from his recent work.

The old virtues and vices are back on display. Even at his peak Brubeck could never have been described as a virtuoso, and his technique, with those heavy block chords

to the fore, remains the same as ever. But that limitation has always mattered much less than his skill in delivering fully developed compositions rather than tunes which are a vehicle for a string of unrelated solos. His allusions to classical music meet with mixed results. The reading of "Yesterday's" is a deft, unshowy piece of footwork, with baroque counterpoint and hints of Chopin giving way to a brisk excursion into stride piano.

But the title theme, adorned with doting lyrics by Brubeck's son Michael, col-

lapses under the weight of a full-blown chorale setting.

The retrospective mood continues on *Caribbean Circle* (Cheeky JD80), Monty Alexander's celebration of his Jamaican childhood. The pianist recently performed this mixture of suave, bop, jaunty reggae and traditional folk songs at Ronnie Scott's.

Live, the concoction worked superbly. Some of the excitement is lost in the studio, however, and the presence of guest soloists such as Jon Paddis and Slide Hampton distracts attention from Alexander's nimble playing.

CLIVE DAVIS

Romantically inclined

From Barber to Gershwin, Decca's latest batch is a rare package of the esoteric, exotic and exciting

CLASSICAL RECORDS

While one hand of Decca has been conducting the celebration of Sir George Solti's 80th birthday by conjuring a flurry of issues and reissues, another has continued to beckon those for whom starry names matter less than the sheer intrigue and variety of music.

Among four recent releases by Argo of American music is Samuel Barber's orchestral music (Decca Argo 436 288-2), played by the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra under David Zinman's direction. The major work is his First Symphony, which has also been recorded by two other companies recently.

Zinman's account is a worthy and solid one, although Solti does better for RCA. This recording nevertheless contains one lovely discovery for me, the *Music for a Scene from Shelley*, Op. 7 (1933).

Such music dispels the myth of Barber as a mere time-and-accompaniment man. The colour, approach, a Debussyian clarity and subtlety, and the work is far more involving than either the two *Essays* (1937 and 1942) or the brilliant *Overture to "The School for Scandal"* (1931), all of which are included as fillers.

The symphony itself, of course, needs no special pleading. Its ambitious single movement proves Barber's structural soundness as well as his gift for exploring the potential of his ideas, albeit in a conventionally Teutonic-cum-classical manner.

A disc devoted to two works

by Aaron Jay Kernis (Decca Argo 436 287-2), a Philadelphia-born in 1960, reveals no such solidity. Kernis suffers from the confused eclecticism common to many American composers. He attempts large-scale forms with impressive confidence but acknowledges too many debts to the minimalists, to Jerry Lee Lewis and to many a late Romantic (Barber and Copland as much as Wagner).

The *Symphony in Waves* has it all. It is difficult not to be overwhelmed by some things in the symphony, like the massive eruption which disrupts the long, still slow movement. But Kernis seems unsure of what his central premise is, beyond that of working on an epic scale, and his finale, rather than crowning the piece or uniting the potentially momentous forces at work in the first movement, ends it with a

triumph; he may yet say important things.

Two recital discs each combine pleasure-giving with informativeness. The soprano Cynthia Haymon's recording (Decca Argo 436 117-2) is a touch spoiled by lack of documentation about the composers, most of whom can be placed in the category of 20th-

century conservatives: names like H.T. Burleigh (1866-1949), Richard Hundley (born 1931) and Celis Dougherty (1902-1986) mix with better-known figures like Barber, Charles Griffes and Ned Rorem.

The subject is love, and those composers who deal with it best are those who spin a sentimental sentimentality for something sincere, honest, or simply voluptuous. Rorem's "Early in the Morning" has a nice Parisian elegance to it, and his Whitman setting "O you Whom I Often and Silently Come" is a lovely reflection of a lovely poem. Dougherty contributes the droll "Love in the Dictionary" — simply a dictionary definition set to music — while the recital ends winningly with Richard Hundley's "Come Ready and See Me". Haymon shapes each song beautifully, and her bright sound has the right resonance of homeliness.

Finally, a veritable party of a recital given by the pianist Alan Feinberg (Decca Argo 436 121-2) and called *The American Virtuoso*. Feinberg includes sometimes overwhelmingly extravagant pieces by Gottschalk, Macdowell and Amy Beach, as well as arrangements of Dowland, Faure and Gershwin by Percy Grainger which testify handsomely to the existence of America's own grand Romantic tradition. But it is not all brilliance: Gottschalk's version of "Home, Sweet Home" and Grainger's "Danny Boy" and Gershwin's "The Man I Love" are completely, irresistibly sentimental.



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overlooking the Rhine. You can take advantage, too, of the hotel's indoor swimming pool and fitness centre.

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THE SUNDAY TIMES

Happy birthday?

Channel 4's 10th anniversary is a prime time to look carefully at its achievements...

Channel 4 emerges as an institution that is failing to make the grade. The channel's output is too often indistinguishable from that offered by other broadcasters, and sometimes, particularly in the case of youth programmes, merely vulgar.

Jonathan Miller examines Channel 4's record in *The Culture* — *The Sunday Times* tomorrow

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BBC1

7.25 News and weather (7:30/25)

7.30 Spider. Musical cartoon (r) (s) (4635073) 7.35 Animal World narrated by Derek Griffiths (s) (5548431) 7.45 Quick Draw McGraw. Animated fun (r) (4635028) 7.50 LWT Bits. Cartoon antics with the forest police (r) (3724695) 8.15 Chucklevision (s) (7508577) 8.35 Bucky O'Hare. Cartoon space-age adventures with the floppy-eared super-hero (r) (6406783)

9.00 Going Live! Sarah Greene and Philip Schofield are joined by Frank Bruno and Tony Slattery. The line-up includes (subject to alteration): 12.20 Football: Bob Wilson and Gary Lineker review the week's action; 12.50 News; 12.55, 1.25 and 1.55 Racing from Wetherby: Wensleydale Juvenile Hurdle (1.00), Tote West Yorkshire Hurdle (1.30), Tetley Bitter Charlie Hall Chase (2.00); 1.10, 1.40 and 2.10 Midweek action from Formula Ford Festival from Brands Hatch; 2.10 Boxing. Midweek action from bills at London's Albert Hall and in Leeds; 2.30 Rugby Union: live coverage of the match between Ireland and Australia from Lansdowne Road, Dublin; 4.40 Final Score (12/08/92)

5.05 News with Chris Lowe. Weather (5:05/431) 5.15 Regional news and sport (8:05/28). Wales (8:50); Scotland (9:05); Saturday

5.20 Dad's Army. Vintage Home Guard comedy, starring Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier (r). (CeeFax) (7091211)

5.50 Big Break. Tony Knowles, Stacey Hildyard and 16-year-old Ron O'Sullivan join Jim Davidson and John Virgo for another round of the snooker game show. (CeeFax) (s) (310948)

6.20 Noel's House Party. John Virgo, Frances de la Tour, Right Said Fred, Julia McKenzie and Mike Gilling, all of whom should know better, join Noel Edmonds for more irresistible fun in Crinkley Bottom (s) (837122)

7.15 Bruce Forsyth's Generation Game. Four more couples compete for the prizes on the conveyor belt. (CeeFax) (s) (200306)

8.15 Casualty. Tough medical drama set in the accident and emergency department of a city hospital. Ruth reveals to Duffin that she has been raped by her former husband; and Simon Eastman wants Kate Miller out of the department after she ignores orders to stop hiring agency nurses. (CeeFax) (s) (206219)

9.05 News and sport with Michael Buerk. (CeeFax) Weather (7:50/73)



The Ghostbusters: Grease, Parkinson and Smith (9:25pm)

9.25 Ghostbusters. CHOICE: This Halloween night drama from the Screen One studio was not ready in time for previewing but the idea looks intriguing enough to give the show a try. The starting point of Stephen Volk's scenario is that ghosts no longer inhabit stately homes and rattle chains but live in council houses in London suburbs. We are, to be precise, in Normant where the Early family, comprising mum and two children, is being disoriented by objects flying around rooms, the appearance of mysterious puddles and visits from a dark stranger. The Earlys call in a parapsychologist and she, in turn, summons help from the technology of television with cameras set up to record every ghostly move. Michael Parkinson, Sarah Greene, Mike Smith and Craig Charles are cast more or less as themselves and it sounds a heap of fun. (CeeFax) (s) (86302122)

11.00 Match of the Day. David Davies introduces highlights of two of today's Premier League fixtures. The commentators are Barry Davies and Tony Gubba (5:38/44)

12.05am Film: Author! Author! (1982) Thin and dated comedy starring Al Pacino as a playwright whose wife leaves him and their five children just as his latest play is due to open, directed by an incompetent and with no leading lady. With Dyan Cannon and Tuesday Weld. Directed by Arthur Hiller. (CeeFax) (900333)

1.50 Weather (5:50/159)

BBC2

8.00 Open University. 9.05 Film: A Champ at Oxford (1940, b/w). Laurel and Hardy comedy directed by Alfred Goulding (24/27/77)

10.05 Film: The Gaspard (1959, b/w) starring Glenn Ford as a writer who decides to murder a blackmailer. Directed by George Marshall (25/75/257)

11.45 So You Want to Play Golf? With Peter Allen (s) (273967)

12.15 Film: Highly Dangerous (1950, b/w). Thriller starring Margaret Lockwood as a biologist in Eastern Europe looking for insects being bred for germ warfare. Directed by Roy Baker (30/78/32) 1.40 Animation Hour. The Cat Came Back (r) (5583354)

1.50 Network East. Reporter Ann Glin takes off in Britain's largest hot air balloon (s) (93065493)

2.20 Tanhaiyan. Episode two of the Pakistan drama (22/47/83)

3.00 Cry of the Mountain. Ireland's birdlife in the spring (53/44)

3.30 Film: Ninotchka (1939, b/w). Greta Garbo's penultimate film in which communism and capitalism meet in Paris as Soviet commissar Garbo falls in love with Melvyn Douglas. Directed by Ernst Lubitsch (28/23/33)

5.20 Stairway. News from the House of Commons Select Committee. (CeeFax) (9891293). Wales: Wales in Westminster

5.50 Political Westminster. Nigel Farage returns to Oxford (r) (732257)

6.35 News and sport with Chris Lowe. Weather (6:35/431)

6.50 Pole to Pole. Michael Palin's odyssey (r). (CeeFax) (524306)



Journey of the spirit: the composer John Tavener (7.40pm)

7.40 Music On 2: Glimpses Of Paradise. CHOICE: A film about John Tavener takes the form of a spiritual journey, conducted almost entirely by the composer himself. It is not a conventional autobiography. Those wishing to know about Tavener's early years or what drew him to music must look elsewhere. He dismisses his marriage in a sentence. What we do get are accounts of his conversion to the Eastern Orthodox Church, the stroke that left him paralysed and the heart condition that brought him close to death and specially staged extracts from his work from the 1970s opera 'Thais' to one of his latest pieces, 'May of Egypt'. The finale, which may say much about the man, consists of Tavener and friends grouped round the piano for a rendering of the popular standard 'Let's Do It'. It is hard to imagine anything more arid and precious (s) (561122)

8.35 Have I Got News for You (r) (s) (642290)

9.05 Testament of Youth. The final episode of the television adaptation of Vera Brittain's book. Vera returns to Oxford (r) (732257)

10.00 Inside Story: The Night Rider. Trenchant documentary about civil rights leader Medgar Evers who was murdered in Mississippi in 1963 (r) (8764)

11.00-7.30 The Vault of Horror: What's Behind the Door, Mummy? hosted by Dr Walpurgis (14/12/22)

11.20 Tales From EC. A look at the 1950s horror comic (21/15/28)

11.25 Film: Creepshow (1982). Film of Stephen King's tribute to horror comics. Directed by George Romero (64/34/12)

1.25am The Art of Illusion with American make-up and special effects artist Tom Savini (72/23/31)

1.30 The Unholy Trinity. A discussion on horror's leading men — Pinhead, Jason and Freddy (47/75/17)

1.40 Film: Curse of the Werewolf (1961). The newly restored and previously unprinted complete version of Hammer's horror story starring Oliver Reed. Directed by Terence Fisher (43/21/33)

3.10 Prime Evil. Director Sam Raimi and actor Bruce Campbell talk about their gruesome film The Evil Dead (82/24/03)

3.15 Terror on the Page (26/20/64)

3.20 Film: The Bride of Frankenstein (1935, b/w). The classic horror tale starring Boris Karloff and Elsa Lanchester. Directed by James Whale. (CeeFax) (25/25/28)

4.30 The Horror of Dracula. Dracula's role in honor (90/107/10) 4.35 Dario's Friends. Dario Argento at work on his new film Trauma (90/75/17)

4.45 Film: Death Line (1972). A gruesome account of overcrowding on the London Underground. Directed by Gary Sherman (81/57/94)

6.10 Film: Abbott and Costello Meet Frankenstein (1948, b/w). Spoof horror directed by Charles T. Barton. Ends at 7.25

ITV LONDON

8.00 TV-am (8:00/230)

9.25 What's Up Doc? Andy Crane, Pat Sharp and Yvette Fielding celebrate Halloween in Mexican style (s) (6306150)

11.30 Movies. Movies. Movies. The latest releases on video and at the cinema (7/83)

12.00 The ITV Chart Show. This week's Video Vault features the Police performing 'Every Breath You Take' (s) (51054)

1.00 News and weather (22/45/15) 1.05 LWT News (53/55/572)

1.10 The Smurfs. Animated fun (30/05/275)

1.25 The People's People. Merit Awards. Ian St John introduces highlights of this week's lunch at the Dorchester Hotel, when leading sportsmen and sportswomen received awards (55/49/77)

2.00 Metlock. When a man is found dead, his girlfriend, a prominent psychic, is arrested as she has foreseen his murder (44/85/51)

2.55 The A-Team. George Peppard and his men take on four of the world's toughest mercenaries (r) (6621580)

3.50 WCW Wrestling. Action from America (11/24/23)

4.40 News and weather (45/58/77) 5.00 LWT News (81/50/73)

5.05 Cartoon Time (7/79/141)

5.20 Beverly Hills, 90210. The immensely lovely pupils of a California high school return with more tales of teenage angst. (Oracle) (s) (55/58/58)

6.15 Goldstars. Ulrike Jonsson and John Fashanu introduce four more contestants to the night of the gladiators. (Oracle) (s) (29/29/3)

7.15 Blind Date. Cilla Black plays cupid to another group of young hopefuls and finds out how last week's winners fared on their dates. (Oracle) (s) (22/70/2)

8.15 Beadle's Book. More unsuspecting members of the public fall foul to Jeremy Beadle's practical jokes (70/69/6)

8.45 News and weather (9/47/27)



Greedy is good: Michael Douglas, Charlie Sheen (8.05pm)

9.05 Film: Wall Street (1987) CHOICE: Writer-director Oliver Stone's cynical study of financial manipulation in mid 1980s America rode to box-office success on the back of public disenchantment with the excesses of capitalism and a string of catchphrases, of which the hero's 'lunch is for wimps' became the most quoted. It is also blessed with a blistering performance from Michael Douglas as the said non-luncher, a wheeler-dealer who prides himself in knowing the price of everything and the value of nothing. Charlie Sheen plays the pushy young broker who comes under Douglas's wing and ends up battered and disillusioned. It is a slick and stylish drama that may not have the depth to mature into a classic. In the meantime the abundance of financial scandals on both sides of the Atlantic continues to give it a topical resonance. (Oracle) (s) (62/59/431)

11.15 Hells and Poles. The inimitable humour of Gareth and Norman (r) (83/24/12)

11.50 Almost Grown. Norman's and Joey's masculinity is in doubt (83/24/12)

12.50am The Big E. Magazine for and about young Europeans (s) (55/77/33)

1.00 The Gig. Barbie Wilde visits London's Suburbia and the Orange Club (34/44/8)

3.00 New Music. Pop videos and interviews (55/22/3)

4.00 Coach. Christine's and Hayden's views on their relationship differ wildly (33/06/2)

4.30 The Hit Man and Her. Michaela Strachan and Pete Waterman take a look at the latest happenings on the club scene (s) (19/79/1)

5.30 ITN Morning News (5/41/78). Ends at 6.00

CHANNEL 4

8.00 Heathcliff. Animated feline adventures (r) (6406035) 8.25 Eureka's Castle. Music and cartoons for the under-fives (r) (4900324) 8.55 Crossroads. Teenagers discuss love and fashion (4900324) 9.25 High 5. Surfing (r) (6457640) 9.55 Trans World Sport. International sporting news (90/7219) 9.00 News Summary (13/361/22) 9.15 Reading: The Morning Line (4013412)

10.00 Kabbadi. Delhi v Haryana in the women's first round (r) (s) (35/296)

10.30 Gazzetta Football Italia. Paul Gascoigne introduces action from the Italian league (63/054)

11.30 American Football with Mick Lushurst and Gary Inlay (r) (53/25)

12.00 Sign On: At Leisure. Simon Hart, Carolyn Edwards and Clare McCann present an entertainment guide for the day with singing and subtitles (25/238)

12.30 Songs and Memories presented by Zamine Garazat. Sahira Kargi, a leading television producer, talks about her work and the role of women in the media (30/561)

1.00 Four-Motions: Sound. Three animated films. Gerald McSpang Boing's Symphony Orchestra, Moorburg and Act V (55/50412)

1.35 Channel 4 Racing from Newmarket. Introduced by Derek Thompson. Live coverage of the Sporting Life Zetland Stakes (1.40), the Ben Marshall Stakes (2.10), the Royston Stakes (2.40), and the Ladbrokes Autumn Handicap (3.10) (54/93/750)

3.35 Film: Seventh Cavalry (1936). Minor western from cult director Joseph H. Lewis starring Randolph Scott as a cavalry officer who is accused of cowardice for deserting Custer at the battle of Little Big Horn. (93/22/55) 4.55 Short and Suite. Animation (r)

5.05 Brookside. Omnibus edition (r). (Teletext) (s) (8651677)

6.30 Right to Reply. On the eve of Channel 4's tenth birthday, chief executive Michael Grade takes part in two discussions. In the first he discusses the controversial abandonment of programmes such as Out and After Dark and the proliferation, some viewers claim, of cheap American buy-ins and ITV repeats. The second discussion is with a media director who claims that unless the channel changes dramatically it will not secure the viewers and advertisers it needs to survive (Teletext) (s) (122)

7.00 A Week in Politics. Vincent Hanna and Andrew Ramsay review the week's political news. The shadow home secretary, Tony Blair, discusses Labour's stance on Maastricht; and the cameras follow Arthur Scargill and Bill Jordan as they take the miners' case to Strasbourg (45/61)

8.00 Wheeling Free. Since a rare tumour cut his spine at the age of seven, Jeff Heath has been paraplegic. In 1980 he embarked on a journey through Central America which became fraught with drama. (Teletext) (s) (122)

9.00 Court TV: America on Trial. In the last of the series, Cynthia McFadden introduces more of America's real-life drama (30/73)

10.00 Breeders Cup 1992. Brought Scott introduces live coverage of the World Championship of flat racing from Gulfstream Park, Florida (33/32)

Lost in the fog: Jamie Lee Curtis is given a hand (11.00pm)

11.00 Film: The Fog (1979). Director John Carpenter is certainly in a fog with this moody but muddled story of a Californian coastal town being haunted by the ghosts of drowned mariners. Jamie Lee Curtis and her real-life mum Janet Leigh star. (54/93/750)

12.45am Film: Vampires in Havana. (1985). Comic animated film following the search by the town's leading vampires for a potion that will allow them to survive in sunlight. Written and directed by Juan Padrón (401/5994)

2.00 The Word (r) (s) (58/27/72). Ends at 2.55

VideoPlus and Video PlusCodes. The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCodes. These allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus number. VideoPlus can be used with most videos. For more details call 0293 121204 (cost charged at 40p per minute plus 30p off-peak) or write to VideoPlus, Acorn Ltd, 3 Jolly House, Navigation Way, London SW11 5TH. VideoPlus, VCR, Recorder and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Marketing Ltd.

SATELLITE

0 Via the Astra and Mariposa satellites. 5.00am Dargy (5:00/9) 5.30 Dargy (5:30/9) 7.00am Dargy (7:00/9) 7.30am Dargy (7:30/9) 8.00am Dargy (8:00/9) 8.30am Dargy (8:30/9) 9.00am Dargy (9:00/9) 9.30am Dargy (9:30/9) 10.00am Dargy (10:00/9) 10.30am Dargy (10:30/9) 11.00am Dargy (11:00/9) 11.30am Dargy (11:30/9) 12.00pm Dargy (12:00/9) 12.30pm Dargy (12:30/9) 1.00pm Dargy (1:00/9) 1.30pm Dargy (1:30/9) 2.00pm Dargy (2:00/9) 2.30pm Dargy (2:30/9) 3.00pm Dargy (3:00/9) 3.30pm Dargy (3:30/9) 4.00pm Dargy (4:00/9) 4.30pm Dargy (4:30/9) 5.00pm Dargy (5:00/9) 5.30pm Dargy (5:30/9) 6.00pm Dargy (6:00/9) 6.30pm Dargy (6:30/9) 7.00pm Dargy (7:00/9) 7.30pm Dargy (7:30/9) 8.00pm Dargy (8:00/9) 8.30pm Dargy (8:30/9) 9.00pm Dargy (9:00/9) 9.30pm Dargy (9:30/9) 10.00pm Dargy (10:00/9) 10.30pm Dargy (10:30/9) 11.00pm Dargy (11:00/9) 11.30pm Dargy (11:30/9) 12.00pm Dargy (12:00/9) 12.30pm Dargy (12:30/9) 1.00pm Dargy (1:00/9) 1.30pm Dargy (1:30/9) 2.00pm Dargy (2:00/9) 2.30pm Dargy (2:30/9) 3.00pm Dargy 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7.30 Film: Flight for Freedom (1949, b/w). Rosalind Russell as an indomitable pilot who saves a downed bomber crew. Directed by Lottar Mendes (90706474).

9.15 News and weather (9064975).

9.15 Start your own Religion with Colin Morris (4) (4349466).

9.30 This is the day. Phyllis Thompson in *Working* (4) (59642).

10.00 See Heart. Clive Mison celebrates the end of *Deal Awareness* (1000). See Heart (59642).

10.30 Week. With signing and subtitles (75265).

10.30 Inside English. How language skills can improve success at work (1710594). Wales: *Cantering Ahead*.

10.45 Italianese. Anna Mazzola presents a new ten-part series on the Italian language and way of life (1715449).

11.00 Cantering Ahead. Juliet Alexander reports on how employers are beginning to recognize the abilities of those with disabilities (4265). Wales (to 12.30): *See You Sunday*.

11.30 Winning. David Hall shows how to make quality systems part of a winning formula (4) (59642).

12.00 Country File. John Craven reports on the uncertain future facing many of Britain's redundant vicars (927888). 12.55 *Weather* (7875710).

1.00 News (9031517). 1.05 *On the Record* with Jonathan Dimbleby and John Oso (907285).

2.00 EastEnders. Omnibus edition (1). (Ceefax) (4) (7694).

3.00 Eldorado (1). (Ceefax) (4) (3951).

3.30 Film: Tanya Buzza (1992) starring Yul Brynner and Tony Curtis. A 19th-century Cossack chief, betrayed by his Polish overlord, flees to the hills and plains. Directed by Britain's J. Lee Thompson. (Ceefax) (1994). 5.30 *Cartoon Double Bill* (108449).

5.50 The Clothes Show. Jeff Banks looks at discount shopping and Carolyn Franklin shows bright women how to shine at formal occasions (4) (202975).

6.15 Weather Watch. Flash, Bang, Wellop. In the first of a six-part series about the weather of the British weather. (Ceefax) (39772).

6.25 News and weather (431825).

6.40 Songs of Praise from the campus of the new Middlesex University in Tottenham. (Ceefax) (4) (82448).

7.15 Last of the Summer Wine. Bill Owen, Peter Salts and Brian Wilde set off for more meanderings around the Yorkshire Dales in *Johnnie*. Clarke's long-running comedy. Clarke tries more tricks to foil Nora's affection. (Ceefax) (4) (325449).

7.45 The House of Eliott. Polished drama series following the fortunes of two sisters and their fashion house. (Ceefax) (4) (445130).

8.40 Birds of a Feather. Pauline Quirke and Linda Robson star as the wise-cracking priestess, Mrs. Madge Dorian (Lesley Joseph) is terrified when she is able to talk to him. (Ceefax) (4) (565625).

9.10 News with Mervyn Lewis. (Ceefax) (572913).



Out on parole: Bill Paterson as a child murderer (9.25pm)

9.25 Tell Tale Hearts.

● **CHOICE**: Stephen Lowe's taut Scottish-based thriller features the excellent Bill Paterson as Anthony Steadman, a child murderer who is controversially granted parole after serving 17 years of a prison sentence. *Tell Tale Hearts* turns out to be as much the story of two women who follow Steadman's release with particular interest. Becky (played by a television newcomer Emma Fielding) is a radio reporter who smells a story. Beyond that, there are suggestions of trauma in her own childhood. Sally (Brid Brennan) wants to confront Steadman about the disappearance of her daughter. Lowe is content to develop the narrative in a leisurely, episodic style, dropping in a hint here and a clue there but not really coming to the point. With more episodes to go, he seems anxious not to show his hand too early. (Ceefax) (677084).

10.10 Everyman. The tale is full of folklore. On the first day of the Celtic new year, a report showing that genuine traces of this ancient world are more familiar to us than we realise. (Ceefax) (313975).

10.50 Doublet House. M.D. Intra American comedy about a teenage model genius (4) (94515).

11.15 Out of the Black at 1.00. Lady Scott arrives in Italy (907555).

11.45 Terahylen (4) (908884). 12.25 *Weather* (2180734).

VARIATIONS

ANGLIA

As London except: 12.30 *Gardening Time* (9023804). 12.50-1.00 *Anglia News* (9023804). 2.00 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 2.10 *Sunday News* (9023804). 2.20 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 2.30 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 2.40 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 2.50 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.00 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.10 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.20 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.30 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.40 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 3.50 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.00 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.10 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.20 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.30 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.40 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 4.50 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.00 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.10 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.20 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.30 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.40 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 5.50 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.00 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.10 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.20 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.30 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.40 *Cartoon Time* (7087733). 6.50 *Cartoon 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Travel by proxy, a global view

Joe Joseph watches Michael Palin and Alan Whicker on their travels, and wonders whether it's better to stay home



NOW that airports are so crowded, and travelling has become almost as adventurous as shopping at Sainsbury's, what a relief that we can get other people to do our travelling for us while we stay at home and keep track of them on the telly, using the time we have saved to do something more intellectually profitable, such as reading about celebrities we'd never otherwise hear of in *Helio*!

If it is better to travel than to arrive, it is better still to have some pretty compelling reason for going through all the bother of packing your bag and getting your bottom jammed full of inoculations in the first place.

Travel doesn't necessarily broaden the mind: often it just gives mean-minded people more persuasive reasons to take a dislike to foreigners. Nor does it furnish exotic literary settings that are automatically more suitable than home-grown ones might be. OK, Hemingway couldn't have written *For Whom the Bell Tolls* had he hung around wrestling alligators in Florida. But imagine if Noel Coward had been travelling in the Wild West and hit on the notion of writing *Private Lives* as a Western, with Amanda and Elyot becoming cowboys who get on each other's nerves on a ranch in Nebraska (Amanda: *Oh, for heaven's sake, Elyot, stop playing the spoons on your chaps. It sounds ridiculous and you'll frighten the horses.* Elyot: *Extraordinary how potent chap music can be.*)

After two episodes of *Pole To Pole* (BBC1), you wonder whether the amiable Michael Palin agreed to undertake this five-month trip from North to South Pole as some sort of drunken bet, a bet he was beginning to regret. The route down the line of longitude of 30 degrees east was presumably devised partly for the fun of crossing Scandinavia, Russia, the Middle East, Africa and Antarctica, but also to capitalise on the success of Palin's documentary *Around the World in 80 Days*.

But although Palin is a companionable fellow-traveller, you do sometimes wonder what the point of it all is. Last time around, there was the coiled spring of a race against time to impose some momentum: heading the clock was the important thing, any spicy characters one met along the way were a

TV REVIEW

bonus. When you have plucked the route for no reason other than because it was there, and the only point of arriving is so that the film crew can say, "It's a wrap", or whatever film crews say when they have reached the South Pole, then you feel you should at least journey well. So far it has been a bumpy ride.

Because 12,500 miles is such a lot of ground to cover in so little television footage (this series runs to only eight episodes), Palin barely has time to do more than stay long enough in any one place to get his passport stamped before packing his holdall and moving on again. Not so much a history of the world in ten and a half chapters, more like ten and a half minutes.

We have already covered one quarter of the series. The first programme, shown a couple of weeks ago, had its rewards in proving to us what we always suspected: that living in the middle of sheets of snow and ice, so far away from civilisation that you cannot get BBC Radio 4 on FM or Long Wave, sends people slowly barking. There are grown men trying to avoid being gobbled by one of the 6,000 to 7,000 polar bears which have moved into the neighbourhood. There is a trapper named Harold Solheim, who has been living by himself in a shack in the middle of sheet ice, missing women a little but not enough to move home for the past 15 years and making dog food out of dead seals: one assumes he killed them, but they may very well have died of boredom in this snowy waste.

There's a man in the Arctic Circle pretending to be the real Santa Claus, with a gang of multilingual elves answering 500,000 letters a year, 100,000 of them from Japan, where most people believe in Shintoism or Buddhism and think Santa Claus was crucified. And there's this Scandinavian light-house keeper who invites Palin for a cosy 28-day spell of fishing and "relaxing" on his remote light-house, if only Palin would send his cameraman back to BBC TV Centre. This is what results when daylight doesn't realise it's supposed to go off at night.

The second episode, last Wednesday, takes a more surreal tone and takes Palin to Leningrad, just before Leningrad changes back to St Petersburg. He is escorted round



Fellow travellers: Palin (up the pole), Lenin lookalike (and vodka chaser), Whicker (jaded appetite) and the Sultan of Brunei (rich and snappy)

town by a Lenin lookalike and finds that trying to buy booze is harder than understanding nuclear physics, forcing him to conclude that "what a man needs after a long day buying a bottle of vodka is a bottle of vodka", a remark that hangs precariously between some sort of clever Keynesian make-work philosophy and a Monty Python paradox sketch scripted by Oscar Wilde.

The surreal tone is compounded by a stopover in Novgorod, which means "new town" but which is the oldest city in Russia. It is also twinned with Watford. Yes, that Watford. Then the train to Kiev breaks down in the middle of the countryside and everyone goes and jumps in a lake, not figuratively like British Rail advises, but literally, in the sense of organising a picnic, stripping down to your Y-fronts and going for a swim until the engine is fixed.

Compared to the traditional "Englishman Abroad" documentary style, Palin is probably post-modern to Alan Whicker's classical school. Last week, Whicker was whizzing off once more. To interview whom? Whicker has now settled into a reliable formula: his subjects are either famous or from Fort Lauderdale. If they can manage fame, Florida accents and a lilac hair rinse, then they are almost guaranteed airtime.

Even Whicker now admits that he is running out of people to interview who conform to his strict classical unities. But just as despair was about to set in, the Sultan of Brunei, the richest man in the world and the one chap Whicker has been desperate to bag for years, agrees to see him for *Whicker's World: The Absolute Monarch* (ITV). The strange thing is that

once he has got him, Whicker merely nibbles at the sultan, which may satisfy his jaded appetite but leaves the rest of us still peckish.

Brunei is almost as exciting as the Arctic, having no alcohol, no bars, no concert halls, no discos, high humidity and heavy censorship. Even a Noel Coward play being performed by an expatriate acting troupe had to be submitted to the government censors, who returned it seven months later with 20 cuts: maybe they thought *Blithe Spirit* was a kind of illicit home-made liquor.

Still, at least we would now finally learn something about the \$10 million the oil-rich Sultan gave to Oliver North and the Contras. "That was all in the papers," the Sultan snapped informatively.

What, then, about his rumoured stake in Harrods? "I never owned Harrods."

Surely money was a horrid

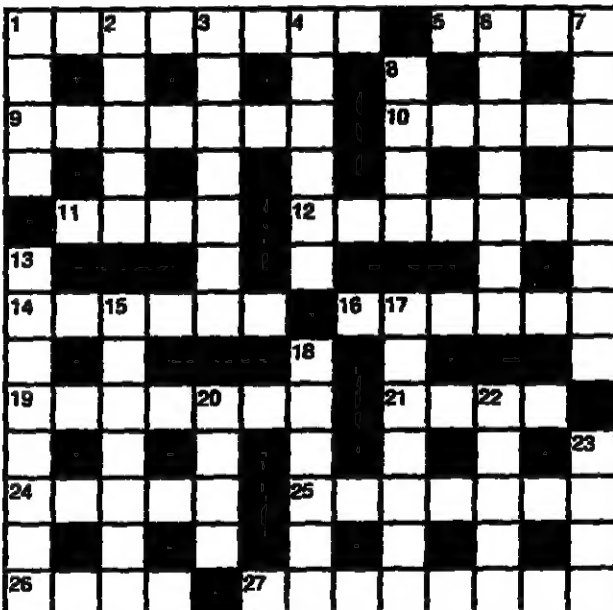
burden, thought Whicker, as he asked: "Do you sometimes envy a simple man in the street, like me?" Actually, the monarch replied: "God wished me to be king. I have no complaints," cruelly killing all those dreams nursed by BBC and Channel 4 commissioning editors that any minute now a Whicker-enthralling Sultan would drop by to submit a proposal for a series titled *Asia on \$1 Billion a Day*.

"So this amiable ruler," Whicker whined, "must steer his course through a world of false smiles, for as we all know a rich man's jokes are always funny and everyone he meets sells out. In a way." Very frank of you to say so, Alan.

Nowadays, the Englishman Abroad's tour is not so much grand as bland. As Sinatra sang: "It's so nice to go travelling... but it's so much nicer, oh it's so much nicer to come home." And that was to New Jersey.

J.J.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 2933



- ACROSS**
1. Suez Canal north port (4,4)
 2. Music pitch symbol (4)
 3. Partial axes (7)
 4. Remove hidden milk (5)
 5. 4th Zodiac sign (4)
 6. Having died out (7)
 7. RC beads string (6)
 8. Arouse sexually (4,5)
 9. Extreme (7)
 10. Destiny (4)
 11. Tribal senior (5)
 12. Watch (7)
 13. Three feet (4)
 14. Run through again (8)
- DOWN**
1. Short gust (4)
 2. Wide stream (5)
 3. Sleep (7)
 4. Conforming (2,4)
 5. Beirut state (7)
 6. Bombard (8)
 7. Horizontal mine shaft (4)
 8. Boring mental work (8)
 9. Delamiation (7)
 10. Not particular (7)
 11. Fish group (6)
 12. Tasting sour (4)
 13. Land (5)
 14. Feeble (4)

SOLUTIONS TO NO 2932

ACROSS: 1 Cut loose 7 Churn 8 Super Bowl 9 Per 10 Ouch 11 Osprey 13 Yellow 14 Offend 19 Poetry 20 Scum 21 Err 23 Uncertain 24 Fix up 25 Dramatic

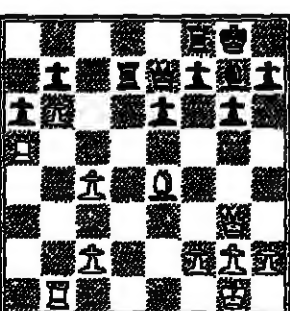
DOWN: 1 Caster 2 Typical 3 Ogre 4 Souise 5 Happy 6 Smart 7 Clarity 12 Cover up 15 Enchant 16 Demonic 17 Tracer 18 Daily 19 Proxy 22 Pram

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene, Chess Correspondent

This position is from the game Stadinov - Akopian, Niksic 1991. The position looks very innocent and the presence of opposite coloured bishops would seem to indicate that a quick draw was on the cards. However, Black's next forced resignation. What was it?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name and address to: The Times, 1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN. The first three correct answers drawn on Thursday next week will win



a Batsford chess book. The answer and the winners will be printed in *The Times* on the following Saturday.

CROSSWORD ENTHUSIASTS: For mail order details of all Times Crossword Books and The Times Computer Crossword software for beginners or experts, (runs on most PCs), telephone Akorn Ltd on 081 852 4575 (24 hours) or call CDS Domestic on 0302 890 000. Postage free until Christmas (applies UK only).

Fear and loathing in London

I lived in London — if I walked the rancid streets of Euston and King's Cross when the skies had been shot black and made night, in the knowledge that they were my own and that I belonged to them... oh, I'd be scared and scared and scared. I'd walk around like someone was about to bury a tooth-sharpened lump of iron in my neck. I'd bend over double as I stumbled along the greasy roads, I wouldn't look anyone in the eye, I'd buy a big lock for my door, I'd hide my phone under my bed, and pray only blood relatives phoned me... no one like the man in the phone booth at Euston Station. That wouldn't be nice, that wouldn't be nice at all.

I'd drink and I'd drink and I'd drink, any excuse, white-out vodka, or perhaps Bailey's to comfort me. I'd binge on big brown paper bags of fries and doughnuts and grease with crunchy bits in the middle of them. And then I'd start to test my luck — wandering down streets when it was dark, humming to myself, seeing how long it took until someone killed me, until they grabbed me between their two hands, and folded and crumpled me into a pile of snapped skin and slapped bones and kicked me into one of those evil-bung dark places.

And London has so many dark places by the arse-end of the night, just before day can get its act together. The kerbs and the windows and the dark places are all hung with evil. It feels like someone is sitting somewhere not too far away, organising an orchestra of hate-waves out and across and around the streets. If dawn was ever delayed for a few hours, I don't think this city could pull back from the edge. If the nights ever got longer, the build-up would be too much...

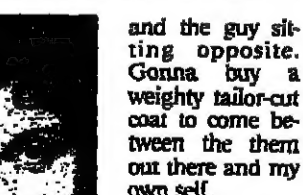
Sitting on someone's front doorstep, watching the hurried millions shiver past, I wonder if city-dwellers are automated by something other than blood. They all seem to have strings of razor-wire wrapped around their hearts, and they move along as if something was pulling them towards an ultimate doom scenario, walking as if they're casting up black magic in their pace, practising a horror



Caitlin Moran feels the despair of poverty on the mean city streets

dance. Every day, having to step over the cold and the crying and the abused, because to give out your heart for one minute would mean collapsing and sinking under the wide, wide current of despair that runs through the streets, that seeps into the underground and rides the night trains until close-down.

It must be very hard to get a sense of perspective, with all the blank-eyed millions shoving about, all elbows and shoes and snarls. You don't wanna look anyone in the eyes, for fear of what you might find in there. And pretty soon you can't see any further than the buttons down the front of your jacket... cute little buttons, concentrate on the minutiae and you're safe. Unbreakable fascination with belt-buckles and shoes and the sex-lives of minor celebrities — it's all light-hearted fun and you don't need to think, Gonna get me a glossy magazine between my face



and the guy sitting opposite. Gonna buy a weighty tailor-cut coat to come between the them out there and my own self. Of course, the helium of cash lets you float around another layer of London entirely. With jacket pockets inflated with credit cards and cash, you don't need to touch the pavements; all wrapped up and cosy-like in a wool-lined Visa coat. And then London could be fun. Each street would be stacked up with the poetry of lust (Oh, I wanna battery-operated thingy, I gotta have a silk one of them), every day would be a series of heavy indulgence sessions, swishing down the street in my black-heeled shoe to have lunch with all my chums at the Restaurant du overwhelming. It's so sweet there — they have a glass tank of chefs and you just point out which one you want.

Yeah, London could be fun if I could pay out to avoid the poor parts, the thin parts — the

GUILTY SECRET: James Herbert

"Until two years ago I would work through the morning, have lunch and get back to the study by about 2.30. Then one day I happened to switch on the television after lunch, and I discovered those wonderful old English black and white films shown on Channel 4 each afternoon. I am afraid I got hooked. I usually look in the paper to find out what year the film was made and then I work out how old I was at the time."



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